

Local Government SERVICE

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N.E.C. REJECTS
AFFILIATION
WITH T.U.C.

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THREEPENCE

EVER members may differ on the issue of affiliation to the Trades Union Council, we think, readily agree that the C. could not have done otherwise than refine the position. In resolving to devote and thorough attention to the subject, Council showed itself quick to detect of feeling among some members of the ciation which ought to be charted and ed in the interests of all, and ready to face or issues boldly and rise to the responsibilities of leadership.

no one can have envied the Council its task, one to which its members had to apply selves amid the harassments of their time responsibilities as local government ers, and one in which they could hardly e, whatever decision they reached, to satisfy one.

After long, unimpassioned, and thoughtful ate, the Council has agreed, without one enting voice, to stand by the decision of 6 and to advise the association to reject iation. That advice was prompted by two arguments: first, that in the eyes of the cific, of members of councils, and of most l government officers, affiliation with the C. would imply affiliation with a party itical movement; second, that a decision such importance, a decision which, as one aker pointed out, might shatter the association, must not be taken at a time when a large portion of the membership was unable to ress its views.

NALGO Must Come First

HE final decision must now rest with the association's members. We believe that great majority will recognise it as one to be ighed solely from the standpoint of the ciation's interests, and their own interests local government officers. A minority may proach the issue from a viewpoint which mpts them to ask first and foremost what the association can do to strengthen a political use, or, if this is putting it too narrowly, at it can do to subserve certain social ideals. e do not doubt their sincerity; but we must ist that the contractual and moral bond of membership extends to no such objects. aders, officers, and members alike must cognise that all are trustees of the association's objects, and that nothing ought to be one or encouraged which would carry any ingle member beyond these objects, as those which he subscribed and pledged a loyalty ditioned by a reciprocal pledge of like aracter.

As an individual, each member of N A L G O support the Labour movement, as he may port any other movement, in whatever ways e open to him, but he has no right to force hers to do likewise by committing them to an giance they do not share.

The pages of trade union history afford ample evidence that even those trade unions associated in Congress looked to political nances only so far as they deemed these to

NALGO AND THE T.U.C.

subserve their own aims and objects; and that well nigh a century passed before they were prepared to accept the view that association with specific political doctrines and a specific political party would further their interests as trade unions. When the decision

taking the view that an association of members who were public officers could not, with constitutional propriety, or without infringing the most widely and commonly accepted principles of English democratic polity, ally itself to one party in the state. In so doing, it recognised overriding principles of democracy which we believe many members, even of the party with whom affiliation would ally us, would acknowledge as rightly recognised, and as being such as no association of public officers could justifiably ignore. In respect of their executive duties, public officers are trustees for all sections of the community; in so far as they are instruments of policy, they must remain the instruments (passive in the political sense) of whatever party wields legitimate power in the state. To have founded the association's attitude on these considerations did not in any way imply the abandonment by the association of its right also to look at the question in the light of what was legitimately of advantage to its interests; since it believed that it could never prosper and attain its own legitimate ends if its position was in any way constitutionally improper, unsupported by acknowledged principles, or adjudged wrongful in the public mind. The fact that officers serve, and must continue to serve, individual councils which differ widely in political complexion; the fact that it is to an individual council that every officer owes his allegiance, and with whom and whom alone, his contract of service is made—these were facts too obvious to be ignored in any practical assessment of the effects of affiliation upon the interests of the association and its members.

No Fundamental Change

WE cannot see that the issue has changed in any fundamental way. Both the Labour party and the unions associated with the T.U.C. have, no doubt, a weightier influence in the counsels of the state than they had. The advocates of affiliation make much of this and argue that, constitutional propriety apart, the advantages of association are now infinitely more apparent and substantial than they were in 1936. We have not noticed any fundamental changes in the local authorities. As for the state, we have not noticed any refusal in principle to give a place to N A L G O which is accorded to any other trade union. Differences of function there are bound to be in relation to war-time organisation. The unions catering for industrial workers are bound to have extensive rapport with the agencies of the state, which needs their help to serve the ends of production, of a kind in which problems of production are involved.

Possibly, however, much of the re-orientation which may have taken place in some members' minds may accrue not so much from a belief in the present enhanced influence of a party as in a belief that it will rule the post-war epoch. There are, no doubt, great changes in the public mind; and some may see signs of a

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was taken by these unions it was based on a judgment of their own interests as unions. N A L G O should be similarly based, however different the conclusion to which it leads.

Affiliation was rejected in 1936, as it is rejected by the N.E.C. today, pre-eminently on the ground that it would associate N A L G O and all its members with a specific political creed and with one party in the state that held that creed. There were some then, and will be some now, who deny that affiliation carries any such implication. Whether it does so or not, technically and legally, is a question on which we hope the N.E.C. will give all the information that it can. It is, however, worthy of note that if there were any possibility of misunderstanding on the point one could have expected the T.U.C. itself to disavow such an implication (since it must know that the question must arise in organisations such as ours which are not affiliated to it). So far as we know, it has never done so. But whatever the technical position may be, the association has hitherto held the view that, in practice, and in the public mind, affiliation does carry these implications.

On this footing, the conference of 1936 emphatically pronounced against affiliation,

growing recognition of the principles of one party. A student of political history would not, however, necessarily conclude that this holds out the prospect of an unlimited hegemony for one party in the post-war years. In English politics, policies are implemented through the permeation of doctrine into all parties, often into parties which nominally wish to oppose such doctrine. It is safe to say that the political faith with which the T.U.C. is associated will continue to be cherished by very large numbers of Englishmen. (It is quite indigenous.) It is likely that it may become increasingly potent in social development. But that one party, in the form in which it now exists, will remain the sole custodian and depository of it, is open to doubt; and on all historical parallels unlikely. Almost as much open to question is it whether such parties as we know now will survive for very long at all in the post-war age.

Local Difficulties

WE think that much of the sentiment which has prompted a re-examination of the issue has accrued from difficulties of a kind which existed before the war but which, in some localities have been recently accentuated. There was always a narrow-minded and ill-instructed type of trade unionist sitting on some councils, who cast his influence against the trade unionism of NALGO and refused to recognise it as genuine simply because it did not carry affiliation with it. Such representatives are not, we believe, typical of the attitude of the party which the T.U.C. supports or even of the trade unions affiliated to Congress. The war has, no doubt, stimulated the power and influence of these people in some places and accentuated their anti-NALGO feeling. Staffs have, in many instances, seen committees, under the influence of such members, concede to affiliated unions what, for lack of affiliation, they have deliberately denied to NALGO. But, though these difficulties have occurred, have they been insurmountable? Has this particular kind of opposition proved indefeasible? Has it prevented the association attaining the results, in war-time achievement and protection of its members, of which there is such tangible evidence? And where difficulties of this kind persist, is it yet proved that the whole force of the association is incapable of removing them, however the efforts of an individual branch may have been fruitless?

Co-operation, Yes!

WE think, then, that the association will, on a substantial balance, follow the council's lead.

A re-affirmation of the decision not to affiliate need cast no doubt upon our solidarity with the trade union world in the spirit and aims of trade unionism as such. The issue appears in some quarters to have been misunderstood, being conceived as involving the question whether NALGO shall become a trade union! NALGO is a trade union. Moreover, it can, and ought to maintain friendly relations with other trade unions and to co-operate with them in common trade union objects. In point of fact it does, and has done for many years past. Some emphasis ought to be laid on these facts. Many members strongly opposed to affiliation may have felt that in its absorption in the issue of affiliation in 1936 the association did not quite adequately express NALGO's right and readiness to support the common objects of trade unionism; and that there was too strong an infusion of complete isolationism in some of the speeches and policies of that day. But different currents set in soon after and have been flowing for some time now. It would, we believe, be salutary if our members were reminded of the N.E.C.'s recent policies on this subject; and informed that the N.E.C. was fully in sympathy with a legitimate development of these forms of co-operation. In any event it is fair to say to-day that, as a good trade union

though outside the T.U.C., NALGO is making a bigger contribution to trade unionism than are some poor trade unions which are within the fold, and that it can continue to do so.

Hospitality for Warriors

MEMBERS of Leicester branch have joined their colleagues in other parts of the country in offering to extend personal hospitality to members of NALGO in the Forces

THE N.E.C. "BLITZED"

NALGO continues to stand firm under what must now be regarded as a deliberate attempt by Field Marshal Goering and his Luftwaffe—who apparently do not share the view of those members who suspect dictatorial tendencies in its administration—to wipe out its council and offices.

It can surely be no coincidence that the London headquarters should now have had six bombs within 100 yards—three of them within five yards—of its walls; that the Birmingham office should twice have been "blitzed"; and that the first heavy raid of the war on what must be described as a town in the north-east should have taken place on the very night that the N.E.C. was assembled there to debate affiliation with the T.U.C.

But all these attempts at terrorism and destruction have failed. The general secretary and the organising secretary remain in the London headquarters, surrounded by craters. The Birmingham office still functions, from a new address. Showers of incendiaries—including a "Molotoff breadbasket" on the door-step—and high explosives all around their hotel did not stop the N.E.C. sitting for ten solid hours next day to debate the fullest agenda it has had for a long time.

Two of its members, indeed, did more than debate. Going "blitz-gazing" in the early hours of the morning, Harry Allen and Teddy Riley twice heard bombs whistling towards them. The first covered them with glass from a window beneath which they dived; the second nearly buried them beneath a pile of bricks and debris from their hotel, the roof of which it had hit as they were about to enter.

Not content with that, they formed a NALGO fire party with Haden Corser, regional officer for the North Western and North Wales district, and Cecil Wood, divisional secretary for the North Eastern and Yorkshire district, and put out a fire in the roof of the hotel, before ending the evening as fortune-tellers in the hotel shelter. NALGO's morale, as Mr. Churchill might have said, remains unbroken!

stationed in their area. All wishing to take advantage of this generous offer should get in touch with the branch secretary, Mr. J. Hill, City Water Offices, Bowring Green Street, Leicester.

Other branches which have offered hospitality to warriors, with the names of the officers with whom contact should be made are: Ashton-under-Lyne.—W. B. BRADLEY, Electricity Works, Ashton-under-Lyne (use of Waterworks' Social Club offered).

Blackburn NALGO Sports and Social Club.—J. COX, 42, Victoria Street, Blackburn. Cambridgeshire.—LEO. MASON, Shire Hall, Cambridge.

Cheshire County.—H. JONES, 47, Walter Street, Chester.

Chester.—J. COLLINSON, City Treasurer's Dept., 43, Northgate Street, Chester.

Essex Rivers Catchment Board.—L. E. INNES, Essex Rivers House, Springfield Road, Chelmsford.

Grimsby.—J. W. L. BUXTON, Borough Treasurer's Dept., Victoria Street, Grimsby (Grimsby 1645).

Hinckley, Leicestershire—J. G. S. TOMKINS, 16, Station Road, Hinckley.

Isle of Wight.—S. H. MATTHEWS, County Hall, Newport, I.O.W.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.—V. GRAINGER, Town Hall, Newcastle-on-Tyne 1.

Skegness NALGO Social Club.—A. J. DAVIS, Town Hall, Rowan Bank, Skegness, Winchester.—R. G. CASTLE, Guildhall.

There are probably many more branches which are willing to help their colleagues in the Forces in this way, and we shall be glad to include them if secretaries will send details.

A Local Government "If"

THOUGH parodies of Kipling's famous poem, "If" are as common as bomb stories, we feel that readers may welcome—if only for quotation at branch dinners (when members of the council are invited!)—this version, sent us by Mr. A. J. Mortimer, public relations correspondent at Brighton.

*If you can work with zest when all about you
Insist your job's as cushy as can be,
If you can keep the peace when councils flout you,
And cost of living rises steadily;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Then hear your bonus plea described as greed,
Yourself as privileged, or get a slating
In local papers—yet not lose your creed;
If you can take the puzzles Whitehall fashions,
And turn them into works of sanity,
And, trained in arts of peace removed from
passions,
Produce from out the bag the A.R.P.;
If you can spend your days at your vocation,
Your nights at spotting fire-bombs or the like,
And not give way to wild exasperation,
When neighbours say your life's a glorious mike;
If you can give up all your relaxation,
And take on work enlisted colleagues leave,
Aware you'll get no fame nor adulation,
Just unpaid overtime—which none believe;
If you can hear, when money's not abundant,
"You ought to thank your stars your job's
secure,"
Then, when a crisis comes, be classed "re-
dundant,"
And still feel that the system should endure;
If you can wield administrative power,
So that its democratic worth is shown,
Remembering, however grand your hour,
That service ill accords with lofty tone;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute,
With ninety seconds worth of duty done—
Yours is a title prized by those that win it,
A Local Government Officer, my son,*

N.W. Week-end School

UNDAUNTED by "blitz" and invasion threats, the North-Western district is planning to hold its annual week-end school as usual this year. The school will be held at Whalley Abbey, near Blackburn, on May 3 and 4. Reconstruction will be the theme of the discussions, and students will hear something of the "shape of things to come" in local government from Mr. H. R. Bennett, B.Sc., director of education, Wigan, and Mr. W. Dobson Chapman, M.T.P.I., L.R.I.B.A., A.I.L.A., lecturer on town planning at the University of Manchester.

Don't be Lonely—Carry L.G.S.?

THE following extract from a letter from a member of the Coventry branch now in the Forces contains a tribute we did not expect:

"A copy of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE saved me from a very boring journey of nearly 100 miles a few nights ago," he writes. "I had to make the journey late at night, there was only one other passenger in the carriage, and we both settled down in opposite corners with the briefest of nods to each other. You can imagine our mutual surprise when, after a little while, we both pulled out copies of L.G.S. At once we were in conversation, and what promised to be a boring journey turned out a very pleasant one."

Unanimous Vote: Statement to be Circulated to Branches and District Committees

Y a unanimous vote, the National Executive Council on March 15 decided against the affiliation of NALGO to the T.U.C. The resolution adopted at the conclusion of a long and interesting debate was as follows : (a) That this Council, having again given consideration to the question of affiliation to the T.U.C., sees no reason to vary a decision reached in 1936, and in any event feels that, in the present circumstances, th a large proportion of the membership is able to express an opinion for or against the question, y further consideration be deferred until the end of the year.

(b) That the statement made behalf of the council by Mr. Armitage in 1936 (setting out the grounds for the council's opposition to affiliation then), together with suitable extracts from the memorandum submitted to the council on March 15, 1941, be sent to district committees and branches.

The debate was based upon the memorandum setting out the arguments for and against affiliation which was before the meeting. The chairman of the council, Mr. A. A. Garrard, the vice-chairman, Mr. F. H. Harrod, the immediate past president, Mr. J. L. Holland, and the general secretary were appointed to make the necessary extracts from this for submission to district committees and branches.

Opening the debate, MR. I. ALLEN (Yorkshire district) said that the present position throughout the country was that a hare had been set running. There was a feeling abroad that the N.E.C. was withholding information from branches. The best way to assist the discussions which were taking place was to supply branches with all the information available before they arrived at a decision. He suggested, therefore, that the memorandum should be circulated, but that, at the moment, the N.E.C. should refrain from giving any direction one way or the other.

A Lead Required

Mr. E. A. S. YOUNG (Metropolitan district) strongly challenged this view, holding that branches and district committees were entitled to expect a lead from the N.E.C. He, personally, was opposed to affiliation and would remain opposed until he was given more cogent arguments in its favour than had appeared in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE or in the memorandum before the council. At the moment, most of the opinion expressed in the journal and by branches indicated the desire for a policy of take and not give.

He agreed that the T.U.C. was not in itself a political association, but the whole essence of its position was its association with the Labour party. Were NALGO to become affiliated to the T.U.C., branches would have the right to representation on trades and labour councils—organisations often responsible, indirectly at any rate, for determining local government policy. It was in this “local” sphere that the greatest danger lay. “My own view,” declared Mr. Young,

“ is that, as a body independent of political associations, we are prepared to stand alone, keeping clear of all possible suggestions of political influence of every kind.”

Mr. T. FREEMAN (North-Western and North Wales district) said that at present none could foresee what the post-war political situation would be. It was impossible in the middle of a war to decide on our alliance with one faction or another. Were we not at present arguing the case with individual pleaders ?

Mr. E. H. MASON (North-Western and North Wales district) reminded members that NALGO had always prided itself on the fact that it played a big part in what they regarded as the finest system of local government in the world. They condemned the policy adopted in certain other countries where officers were replaced when a new party attained power. Affiliation with the T.U.C. would represent a step in that direction. It was contrary to the interests of the association and would go a long way towards destroying that local government structure which had been built up with NALGO's assistance. Did anyone really believe that the T.U.C. was non-political ? It was unthinkable that NALGO should ally itself with any political party merely on the grounds of expediency.

Mr. T. NOLAN (Yorkshire district) felt that the agitation in favour of affiliation was far from strong ; he had never heard it mentioned in his own town. From the letters urging affiliation which had appeared in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE it seemed, in the main, to be a movement of youth and to have resulted partly from NALGO's failure to obtain everywhere an adequate cost of living bonus. But they had no reason to believe that they would have done any better with the claim for a bonus had the association been affiliated to the T.U.C.

It was true that some members might gain from affiliation—but anything which NALGO did must be for the benefit of the whole of its membership.

Mr. G. LLEWELYN (South Wales and Monmouthshire district) urged that it was a mistake to regard this movement as merely the agitation of a few cranks. It had developed from a growing feeling that the interests of NALGO were bound up with those of the other trade unions, and that there should be closer co-operation in their efforts to achieve their common aims. Members were wondering about the future, when the war was over. Some had been surprised by the strength and power of anti-democratic forces, even in this country, and felt that NALGO should ally itself with the great trade union movement, which they regarded as embodying the democratic idea and which, they believed, alone possessed the strength to repel any attack that might come upon the standard of life of the common people.

Political Aspect Overstressed

There was a tendency, he thought, for opponents of affiliation to over-emphasize the political aspect. He could see no great objection to the servants of the people declaring their adherence to the principle upon which their service was based.

NALGO did not hesitate to use the facilities provided by the trade unions to obtain the objects its members desired. It was using them to get what it could, without giving anything in return. The association could make a real contribution to the trade



WHY DOESN'T HE DO SOMETHING ?

The majority of NALGO's members were taking no interest in this controversy, and the branches asking for affiliation were mainly those which had labour majorities in their councils. NALGO's independence was the main issue at stake.

Advantages Overweighed

The N.E.C., Mr. Freeman urged, must lay the fullest information before branches and must give a definite lead. The success of the service rested on the independent position which officers occupied to-day. In the memorandum as presented, the disadvantages of affiliation far outweighed the advantages.

Mr. A. A. GARRARD, who presided, asked how much of this agitation for affiliation was coming from those who wanted to abandon NALGO's independence. He had still to be told what advantages would come from affiliation.

Mr. R. H. WILLIAMS (South Wales district) said that in 1936, when the Aberdare branch put forward to conference a resolution urging affiliation, the bulk of the South Wales members were opposed to it. To-day, however, a feeling in favour of affiliation was growing among them. The line taken by supporters of the policy was that NALGO lacked punch ; it was not moving as a body together with other workers. As a result of its independence, it was being left high and dry. It had to approach the government departments through the back door and it lacked the weight and influence which it should have. Its authority was not commensurate with its importance and its strength.

union movement, and the supporters of affiliation believed that their policy would react to the advantage of the service and of NALGO.

On Whitleyism, NALGO was not being treated with the respect to which it was entitled. It would be treated with greater respect if it were backed by the T.U.C. This movement was not a passing phase, but arose out of a laudable desire of many members to make common cause with the people they served.

Mr. J. L. HOLLAND (immediate past president) urged that the N.E.C. should issue to branches the memorandum presented in 1936, together with a suitable preface warning the association that affiliation would have a shattering effect upon NALGO, and would cause it to lose members in all ranks.

Every officer in his daily life, and in his service, was already serving democracy. They had the right to ask, therefore, what NALGO would get out of affiliation. Did supporters of the policy really think that by sinking themselves in the T.U.C. they would develop punch as an association? On the contrary, they would merely become an insignificant unit in that body.

The work and mode of living, the terms of service, and the methods of remuneration of the average trade unionist differed from those of local government officers. Did members think that trade unionists would have the imagination to march behind the banner of NALGO's demands? They would not for a moment. The average trade unionist was bound up with his own ideas. He was always willing to vote for a new Town Hall, because it made employment, or to staff a service, but when it came to the remuneration of officers the position was very different. Affiliation would simply mean that NALGO would be dragged at the wheels of the T.U.C. chariot, and the effect on the association and its status would be very damaging.

“Political Opportunism”

Mr. E. R. DAVIES (Southern district), speaking as a representative of the “Conservative South,” said that were NALGO to be affiliated to the T.U.C. to-day, the South-Midland Whitley council would probably come to an end. Not only would the Whitley council lose members immediately, but councils now hesitating about joining it would refuse to do so. Affiliation would throw NALGO back 20 to 30 years. In the Southern district alone, he suggested, the association would lose at least half of its members.

What was behind the demand? It was no more than political opportunism based upon the fact that a prominent leader of the T.U.C. was in the Cabinet, and that in South Wales many trades and labour councils decided council policy before the local authority met. This made the position of NALGO difficult in South Wales, and it was evidently thought that affiliation to the T.U.C. would solve the problem. In the Southern district, NALGO was in an equally difficult position with certain authorities, and on the argument advanced by South Wales he would be equally justified in asking NALGO to join the Primrose League because, while the T.U.C. was the mainspring of the Labour party, the Primrose League was the backbone of the Conservative party.

If local government officers wished to preserve their status and have their advice respected, they must show all political parties that they were completely independent.

Mr. H. J. ALTOUN (South-Eastern district) declared that the feeling in his district was overwhelmingly against affiliation, although that view might be modified when fuller details were given to the branches and district committees. The present attitude in the district was based upon recognition of the

fact that NALGO was a peculiar organisation; its members performed work of an entirely different nature from that performed by members of the usual type of affiliated union. To-day, NALGO was growing in strength owing to the fact that it could admit all local government officers to its ranks. Were it to affiliate to the T.U.C., the chief officers and senior officers would leave it and it would become merely a clerical organisation like the civil service clerical association. Some members might consider such a development desirable, but it was well to face the facts.

No Strong Demand

Mr. E. L. RILEY (North-Western and North Wales district) said that although this problem was an important one, and one which must be faced by the association, it was by no means pressing. There had been no demand for affiliation from any important branch in his district, and he thought that probably not 2,000 out of the 20,000 members in the district would be prepared to vote in favour of affiliation. Provided NALGO worked efficiently as a trade union they would hear no more about it, and in 80 per cent of the country NALGO was regarded as working satisfactorily. The members in his area were satisfied with the association and did not desire affiliation, because NALGO produced the results; his branches did not spend their time on smoking concerts and glee clubs. In Liverpool, he could make out a good case for affiliation to the Conservative party, since that was the boss party in the local authority.

In any case, they had no right to reach a decision until the association was restored to its entirety when the war was over. It would be impossible until then to get a true picture of the opinion of members. In the meantime, the N.E.C. must regard itself as a trustee to preserve what they had got.

Mr. LEWIS BEVAN (South Wales and Monmouthshire district) said that nearly every council in South Wales had a labour majority, and that fact led branches to feel that affiliation would give them the ear of the authorities. There was also a feeling that in the use it was making of the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Order, NALGO was taking advantage of the work of the T.U.C. without paying its footing.

Mr. L. H. TAYLOR (North-Western and North Wales district) recalled a speech by Mr. W. Kean, a vice-president of the T.U.C., at the 1935 conference of the Labour party, when he said: “We are not two movements, but one, with common aims, interests and activities.” In the face of that, and of much similar evidence, it was futile to say that the T.U.C. was merely a deliberative body. If local government officers were to be true to the public they served, they could not ally themselves with a body which represented the view of one of the political parties only.

Mr. YOUNG then moved, and Mr. RILEY seconded the resolution quoted above, and it was adopted by a unanimous vote.

WHITLEYISM PROGRESS More Talks with Associations of Local Authorities

Other items on an exceptionally heavy agenda included:

Compensation for Loss of Wife

A letter was read from the Salford branch suggesting that compensation under the Personal Injuries (Civilians) Scheme should not be limited to gainfully occupied persons, but should be extended to their wives. In most families, the letter pointed out, a wife performed the greater part of the household duties and consequently, if the husband were deprived of her services, temporarily or permanently, as a result of war injuries, he

was put to additional expense in having those services performed.

The Council agreed that, since this was a matter which could not be restricted to local government officers, but affected all workers, representations should be made through the T.U.C. Advisory Committee.

Nursing Services Joint Committee

It was reported that the National Whitley Council had set up a nursing services joint committee. The staffs side consisted of five representatives of NALGO—Messrs. H. Allen, A. G. Bolton, E. A. S. Young, J. E. N. Davis, and T. M. Kershaw, eight representatives of the Royal College of Nursing, and one representative each of the National Union of Municipal and General Workers, the Transport and General Workers' Union, and the National Union of Public Employees.

The Council agreed that NALGO's Nurses' Charter, as amended, be made the basis of the association's policy, but that, without prejudice to the long-term policy of the association, its representatives should be instructed to take up the case of assistant nurses in the joint committee.

L.A. Associations to Meet NALGO

It was reported that, notwithstanding its view that the extension of Whitleyism in local government at present was impracticable and inadvisable, the County Councils' Association had expressed its readiness to join with the other three local authorities' associations in entering upon immediate discussions with NALGO, the Ministries of Health and Labour, and other interested bodies, “with a view to making, subject to the approval of the executive council (of the C.C.A.) and to the separate treatment of urban and rural problems, arrangements for the future application of Whitleyism to such grades of the administrative, technical, and clerical staffs of local authorities as may be deemed appropriate for the purpose.” The County Councils' Association had asked NALGO for an advance statement of the object it had in view, and the Council approved the following letter from the general secretary to Sir Sidney Johnson, secretary of the C.C.A.:

“I am directed by the National Executive Council to say that they appreciate very much indeed the willingness of the local authorities' associations to meet NALGO in conference.

“You will remember that the full story of our Whitley Council system was included in the memorandum which was sent to you prior to the Middlesex Guildhall conference held on the 11th April, 1940.

“I expect you would now prefer a much shorter statement of the points we should like to discuss with you. May I put them out in this form:

“The present ‘Whitley’ scheme for the administrative, technical, and clerical services of local authorities is made up of fifteen provincial councils and a National Whitley Council.

“The provincial councils are composed of representatives of local authorities within the areas and representatives of national organisations of the staffs of local authorities. The national council is composed of representatives appointed from the various provincial councils.

“The local authorities' associations do not appoint representatives on either the provincial councils or the national council.

“Some provincial councils have been functioning much longer than others, and the whole of the provincial councils are not equally well supported.

“NALGO feels that much of the present valuable work of the National Council and the provincial councils is neutralised by the abstinence of the local authorities' associations from deliberative assemblies.

We should like the conference to discuss :
Whether the constitutions of the present
national and provincial Whitley councils
meet with the approval of the local authorities' associations ;

If not, what changes in the constitutions are
desired to ensure the local authorities' associations' approval ;

If the constitutions were changed, would
the local authorities' associations recommend
their constituent members to support
the Whitley system for the administrative,
technical, and clerical services ?

Is there an alternative system which would be
more acceptable to the local authorities' associations ?

" You know all about the principles of
Whitleyism, and I take it that what we want
to do now is to find a mutually acceptable
form of Whitleyism for those services which
NALGO represents."

Conference and N.E.C. Election

Mr. H. Allen, on behalf of the Yorkshire
district committee, moved that the decision
to hold a conference and election for the
N.E.C. this year be rescinded, and that a re-
duced conference of branch representatives
and an election with simplified procedure be
held. He felt, Mr. Allen said, that it was
visable, particularly after the debate on
affiliation to the T.U.C., that a representative
athering should be held, to give the branches
a chance of ventilating their views, and the
council an opportunity to reply. A feeling
was growing that the council was trying to
get away with things itself and was depriving
rank and file of having its voice heard and
electing its representatives. There were no
insuperable difficulties in the way of holding
a meeting on a reduced and reasonable wartime
basis.

It was reported that resolutions protesting
against the decision not to hold a conference
and elections had been received from the
Eastern, South Eastern, and Yorkshire district
committees, and from the Essex C.C. and
Sheffield branches, and that the East Midland
district committee had urged the holding of a
legate meeting. After further discussion,
however, Mr. Allen's motion was lost.

Post-War Planning

It was reported that the Leicester branch
had set up a NALGO Reconstruction
Advisory Committee to consider and formulate
plans and schemes of benefit to the
community in post-war re-planning, that the
Leicester and Fylde area education committee
proposed to organise a lecture on the possibilities
of post-war reorganisation in local government,
and that NALGO had been invited to submit to the Expert Committee on Com-
pensation and Betterment, appointed by the
Minister of Works and Buildings, its views on
the steps to be taken, now or before the end
of the war, to prevent the work of recon-
struction thereafter being prejudiced.

The council appointed a sub-committee
consisting of Mr. P. H. Harrold, Mr. S. Lord,
the general secretary, and the legal secretary,
to prepare a memorandum for submission to the
Committee on Compensation and Better-
ment. A suggestion that the association
should appoint a NALGO committee to
consider post-war reconstruction was referred
to the emergency executive.

Government and the Service

A resolution of the Leicester city branch,
expressing concern at the attitude of the Govern-
ment towards the local government service, and
the tendency to supersede approved machinery
and experienced officials by bureaucratic civil
service authority, deplored the apparent
intention of the Ministry of Labour, in reviewing
the schedule of reserved occupations, to ignore
the claims of civil defence administration and
essential public services, and calling on the
N.E.C. to make determined representations



"What the !! * * !—this is CONTROL!!"

to the Government departments concerned,
was received. It was stated that, on the
question of reservation, everything possible
had been done, but that the result of
NALGO's representations would not be
known until the revised schedule of reserved
occupations was published.

Insurance Salary Limit

It was reported that the Boston and Gilling-
ham branches and the North Western and
North Wales district committee had urged the
N.E.C. to endeavour to get the Government to
increase the salary limit for compulsory
health and pensions insurance from £250 to
£420. The general secretary stated that this
point had been put before the Ministry of
Health some time ago, and remained the
association's policy. But it was impossible to
do anything more at present, since it had
been officially indicated that Parliamentary
time was not at the moment available for the
introduction of a measure to give effect to the
changes desired. It was agreed that Head-
quarters should take every available oppor-
tunity to press the point.

Subscriptions

Resolutions from the Doncaster, Somerset,
and Halifax branches and the Southern District
committee, urging revision of subscription
rates generally and for members in the Forces,
were referred to the emergency executive.

Resignation of Mr. V. Grainger

The following letter was read from Mr.
V. Grainger, one of the representatives of the
North Eastern district, who has been compelled
to give up active NALGO work on his
appointment as chief cashier to Newcastle-
upon-Tyne corporation :

" It is with considerable regret that I write
to terminate my active association with the
National Executive Council.

" When I attended my first meeting at
Weston in 1932, I had little idea that the
ensuing years would bring me such happiness

or that the service of the Association could
take so great a hold upon my affections,

" To serve upon the Council is to obtain
a new vision of the tremendous task which
NALGO has set itself, and the close co-
operation which membership of the Council
affords can only produce a determination to
strive mightily for the ideals which the associa-
tion has in view for local government and for
the officers of local government. One is only
sorry that one's personal effort has too often
failed when a little extra push would have
meant so much

" There are many things I would like to
say about NALGO, but nothing can
convey the sense of loss which my resignation
will mean to me."

Mr. Garrard, saying that Mr. Grainger's
resignation would be received with real
regret, moved that the council send a letter to
him, expressing its sincere thanks for all
that he had done for NALGO, its congratula-
tions on his promotion, and its good wishes for
his future success. Mr. R. E. Heron
seconded, praising also Mr. Grainger's great
work during the past 16 years as secretary of
the North-Eastern district committee, and
the resolution was carried unanimously. It
was decided to invite the North-Eastern
district committee to elect a member to the
N.E.C. to succeed Mr. Grainger.

Earlier in the meeting, Mr. Garrard had
extended a warm welcome to Mr. Lewis Bevan,
the new member elected by the South Wales
and Monmouthshire district committee.

Those attending the meeting included :

Mr. A. A. Garrard (chairman), Messrs.
R. Adams, H. Allen, H. J. Aitoun, E. F. Bacon,
L. Bevan, W. R. Bevers, J. Brown, A. G.
Bolton, J. Chaston, A. Clark, R. W. Coppock,
Miss E. Dawson,

Messrs. E. R. Davies, A. B. Day, T. Freeman,
F. H. Harrold, R. E. Heron, J. L. Holland,
H. A. Jury, G. Llewelyn, S. Lord, E. H. Mason,
T. Nolan, A. Denton Ogden, E. L. Riley,
E. Robins, H. Russell, F. Sharpe, Miss
I. Stansfield.

Messrs. G. A. Stone, H. Taylor, L. H. Taylor,
J. H. Tyrrell, R. Williams, E. A. S. Young.

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HIGH COURT JUDGMENT FOR NALGO

Association's First-Round Victory in War Pay Claim

NALGO has won the first round in its attempt to apply the Conditions of Employment and Arbitration Order, 1940, to the local government service.

By a majority of two to one, a King's Bench divisional court on March 18 dismissed with costs an application on behalf of Bolton Corporation for an order prohibiting the National Arbitration Tribunal from adjudicating on a dispute between NALGO and Bolton Corporation, referred to it by the Minister of Labour under Part II of the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Order, 1940.

The dispute—the first of a number of test cases which the association is bringing before the arbitration tribunal—arose out of the refusal of Bolton Corporation to supplement in any way the war service pay of members of its staff with the Forces, despite the recommendation of the Lancashire and Cheshire provincial council, of which Bolton is a constituent member.

It came before the tribunal on February 27, when Mr. W. P. Spens, K.C., M.P., who, with Mr. Erskine Symes, represented NALGO, sought an award which would make it a condition of service of officers in the employ of the corporation that, in the event of their serving in H.M. Forces or in civil defence, they should have made up to them the difference between their service pay and the remuneration they would have received had they remained in the service of the corporation.

At the outset of the hearing, Mr. Sydney G. Turner, K.C., who, with Mr. E. J. C. Neep, represented Bolton, submitted that the tribunal had no jurisdiction to hear the dispute, and announced that he proposed to test that submission in the High Court. After hearing his arguments, the tribunal (consisting of Mr. Justice Simonds (chairman), Sir John Forster, Mr. Clive Cookson, and Mrs. M. Robinson) agreed to this course, on the understanding that Bolton Corporation would do all it could to expedite the hearing.

•What is a "Trade Dispute"?

The application came before the Lord Chief Justice (Lord Caldecote), Mr. Justice Atkinson, and Mr. Justice Tucker on March 10, and the hearing lasted two days. Mr. Turner based his argument that the tribunal had no jurisdiction on two main grounds:

1. There was no "trade dispute" as defined in the Order; and

2. The claim was for something which the corporation had no power to concede. In support of his first ground, Mr. Turner contended:

(a) A trade dispute must be a dispute in a trade. The corporation did not carry on trade in the ordinary sense of the word, and therefore no trade dispute existed.

(b) A trade dispute is defined in the order as "any dispute or difference between employers or workmen, or between workmen or workmen, connected with the employment or non-employment, or the terms of the employment, or with the conditions of labour of any person." A workman is defined as "any person who has entered into or works under a contract with an employer, whether the contract be by way of manual labour, clerical work, or otherwise." The professional, technical and administrative officers of a local authority were not workmen within the terms of this definition; they did not perform manual labour or clerical work, and the words "or otherwise" should be con-

strued as meaning work of the same class as manual labour or clerical work.

(c) Since the claim was for payments to be made to the council's employees after they had left its service, it was not connected with the terms of their employment.

In support of his second ground, Mr. Turner argued that a decision by the tribunal upholding NALGO's claim would have the effect of depriving the corporation of the discretion given it by the Local Government Staffs (War Service) Act.

All Officers are "Workmen"

Giving judgment, the Lord Chief Justice held:

1. The expression "trade dispute" must be taken to have the meaning assigned to it in the definition contained in the order, and therefore the argument that there could be no trade dispute since the corporation did not carry on a trade failed.

2. The definition of "workman" in the order was wide enough to include professional, technical, and administrative staffs, as well as clerical staffs. The phrase, "by way of manual labour, clerical work, or otherwise" in the definition was to be read as if it said "by way of manual labour, clerical work, or some other duty which is neither manual labour nor clerical work." Therefore, all the servants of the corporation were workmen for the purposes of the definition of "trade dispute."

3. An undertaking to pay remuneration to an employee after he had ceased to serve the corporation might be a term of employment; it was no different in principle from a decision of the corporation to engage a servant on the terms that, on ceasing to be in its service, he would be paid a lump sum, or an annual sum for a term of years or for life, subject to any conditions which might be agreed.

4. He saw nothing irregular or in excess of the powers of the corporation if it were to bind itself, or if it were required by award of the tribunal to bind itself in advance to make payments to employees leaving its service to perform war services.

It was true that this meant the corporation giving up its discretion. Compulsory arbitration was not always approved as a method of settling disputes, but if a party to a dispute was forced to submit his case to arbitration, it was very likely he would be deprived of a right which he would otherwise have of deciding the matter in issue for himself.

For these reasons, the Lord Chief Justice held that the application should be refused.

Mr. Justice Tucker Agrees

Mr. Justice Tucker agreed with this judgment, on the following grounds:

1. The definition of "trade dispute" in the order was plain, and included any dispute of the kind referred to arising between employers or workmen, whether or not the workmen were engaged in a trade;

2. No evidence had been produced to show that the officers concerned were not "workmen" within the meaning of the definition. It would be for the tribunal to decide which were "workmen" and which were not.

3. If an employer or an employee made it a part of the contract between them that the employer should confer some benefit on the employee on the termination of his service, or

on his dependants at his death, then such provision was clearly a matter "connected with the terms of the employment."

4. The Local Government Staffs (War Service) Act having empowered the corporation to make a present to its employees on war service, there was nothing to prevent it binding itself contractually to do what it was empowered to do voluntarily.

Dissenting Judgment

Mr. Justice Atkinson disagreed with the judgments of his colleagues, holding that the application should succeed. He gave two grounds for his opinion:

1. The order was restricted to "trade or industry" "since to construe the word 'employers' as meaning every employer of any kind, a 'trade dispute' as including disputes having nothing to do with trade or industry, and the adverb 'otherwise' as embracing every branch and kind of service other than manual labour and clerical work, would be to give the Act a scope and effect which I am convinced the legislature never contemplated for one moment."

The fact that in Part III of the Order, the words "trade or industry" were defined as including "the performance of its functions by a public or local authority" was immaterial, since that definition affected Part III of the order only, and this alleged dispute had not been reported under Part III. Further, he could find nothing in the regulations under which the order was made which enabled the Minister to declare that the performance of its functions by a local authority was that which it was not, a trade or industry.

2. Neither Defence Regulation 58AA (under which the order was made) nor the order itself could confer on the tribunal the power to substitute its discretion for that of the corporation, and compel the corporation to incur contractual obligations to make payments which it thought ought not to be made.

After the Lord Chief Justice had announced that the application would be refused, with costs for NALGO, Mr. Turner sought leave to appeal. This was granted, and Bolton subsequently decided to take the case to the Court of Appeal.

The appeal will probably be heard between Easter and Whitsun, and until it is settled the dispute cannot go again before the National Arbitration Tribunal; were the appeal to succeed, the dispute could not be heard by the tribunal at all. On the other hand, were the appeal to be rejected, the dispute would go before the tribunal to be argued on its merits.

INADEQUATE BONUS

Dispute With Lytham St. Annes

Another test action came before the tribunal on February 28. This was with Lytham St. Annes corporation, arising out of its failure to pay its staff the cost-of-living bonus recommended by the Lancashire and Cheshire provincial Whitley council.

Mr. Spens and Mr. Erskine Symes again represented NALGO. The corporation was represented by the Mayor of Lytham, Councillor Miss J. Rossall, J.P., Ald. Sydney Smith, chairman of the finance committee, Councillor Horsfall, chairman of the electricity committee, and Councillor Jowett.

At the outset, Mr. Justice Simonds drew attention to the fact that the challenge made by Bolton corporation to the jurisdiction of the tribunal might, if successful, affect this dispute also. It was agreed, however, that the tribunal should hear the arguments but reserve its decision until the result of Bolton's application was known.

TRIBUNAL ASKED TO ENFORCE BONUS AWARD

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(Continued from preceding page)

Opening the case, Mr. Spens said that NALGO was seeking to uphold the results of collective bargaining. On February 1, 1940, the National Whitley Council adopted a cost-of-living bonus award which would give to local government officers a bonus of per cent. on the first £300 of salary and of per cent. on salary in excess of £300, or on £200, whichever was the less. This award was endorsed by the Lancashire and Cheshire Whitley council on March 7, 1940.

On the following day, each of the 178 local authorities in the Lancashire and Cheshire area was informed of resolutions of the National and the Lancashire and Cheshire Whitley councils. Of those 178 authorities, 149, including Lytham St. Annes, were constituent members of the provincial council.

Lytham St. Annes council considered the recommendations on May 20, 1940, but decided, instead of adopting them, to grant a bonus of 3s. a week only to officers receiving less than £260 a year, and to give no bonus to officers receiving more than £260. This decision was upheld by the council's emergency committee on September 30.

Of the 178 local authorities in the provincial council's area, 122 had now adopted the award without modification, and the number was increasing week by week.

The object of the national award, counsel continued, was to secure uniformity, through national machinery. In taking an independent line, Lytham corporation was seriously threatening the value of that national machinery, and was causing dissatisfaction amongst its employees.

Mr. Justice Simonds pointed out that, so far as he could recall, the tribunal had always favoured a flat rate bonus rather than a percentage increase.

Mr. Spens replied that the National Whitley Council had adopted the percentage basis because, in its view, it was the fairest in the circumstances.

Whitley Awards "Unimportant"

Alderman Smith, opening the case for Lytham, said that the council was prepared to offer three alternatives to its present scale:

1. An increase in the flat rate payment to 5s. a week up to £260.
2. Adoption of the Burnham scale; or
3. Adoption of the civil service scale.

The council strongly favoured the flat rate basis, which was that adopted generally—in fact, it was "only people like NALGO, in privileged occupations, sheltered from the blast" who had the percentage rate. His council was also strongly opposed to any bonus for higher-salaried officials. Both the Burnham scale and the civil service scale gave no bonus over £260.

After the last war, Lytham paid a bonus on the civil service scale, rising or falling with the cost of living. In 1937, in response to NALGO agitation, the bonus was stabilized at 55 points. When, later, the cost of living index fell to 36 points there was no reduction in salaries; yet immediately after the war, when the cost of living began to rise, NALGO began to agitate for a bonus.

Lytham, he continued, could not afford to pay a high bonus. It was a residential town, with practically no industries, and many of its ratepayers were having to face the higher cost of living with falling incomes. The council regarded the Whitley scale as unnecessarily extravagant. The fairest way would be for nobody to have a bonus, then all would have

to bear the burden equally and there would be no sacrifice.

Mr. Spens had claimed that, out of 178 local authorities in the Lancashire and Cheshire provincial council area, 122 were paying the Whitley scale in full. Yet, in the country as a whole, according to NALGO's own journal for January, out of 837 authorities paying a bonus, only 282 had adopted the Whitley scale without modification. That proved conclusively that too much importance should not be attached to the Whitley Council recommendations.

"The Whitley Council is not like the laws of the Medes and Persians," Mr. Smith declared. "It is there only as an advisory body, it always has been regarded as an advisory body, and scores of authorities have never taken any notice of its recommendations.

I personally, do not attach any importance to them at all, except to say that it is advisable to have its opinion in an advisory capacity."

Mr. Spens, replying, pointed out that Lytham St. Annes was not suffering from war depression to the extent that other towns were. It had been made the headquarters of large numbers of civil servants and was better off than many places. Mr. Smith had made it clear that he himself had no use for conciliation machinery between employers and employees, holding that individual employers should deal with their employees direct; but it was impossible to run a country on those lines in war-time.

After further argument, the hearing was concluded, the tribunal reserving its award until it was satisfied that it had the jurisdiction to make one.

WAR BONUS HYPOCRISY EXPOSED

BETWEEN the outbreak of war and the end of 1940, the average of wage-rates of British workers increased by 16 per cent.

This fact, disclosed in the "Ministry of Labour Gazette" for January, completely exposes the hypocrisy of the argument so often heard when local authorities discuss NALGO requests for adoption of the Whitley Council bonus scales, that to give a bonus to "privileged" local government officers would impose an unfair burden on ratepayers who have not themselves received any bonus.

The article shows that, in fact, the majority of ratepayers are already enjoying bonuses far in excess of anything for which local government officers have asked or obtained. It states:

"The marked rise in rates of wages which began soon after the outbreak of the war, mainly on account of the increase in the cost of living, continued throughout 1940.

"In the industries for which statistics of changes in rates of wages are regularly compiled by the Department, the changes reported during the year are estimated to have resulted in an aggregate net increase of over £2 million in the weekly full-time rates of wages of nearly 8 million workpeople of whom about 4½ million had already received some increase in wage rates during the last four months of 1939. In the whole period between the outbreak of the war and the end of 1940 the number of workpeople whose wage rates were reported to have been raised, in the industries covered by the statistics, was about 8 million, the aggregate net increase in their full-time weekly wages being estimated at about £3 million.

"There were wide variations in the amounts of increase granted in different industries, but it is estimated that the average level of full-time weekly rates of wages, in all the industries (including agriculture) for which information is available, was about 12 per cent higher at the end of 1940 than at the end of 1939, and about 16 per cent higher than at the beginning of the war."

An explanatory note adds that the changes reported are mainly those arranged by organisations of employers and workpeople. In many cases, changes arranged by individual employers and affecting unorganised groups of workers are not reported to the Ministry of Labour. The details given in the second paragraph quoted do not include agricultural workers (who received increases of between 23 and 55 per cent, to a guaranteed minimum of 48s. a week), government employees, shop assistants, clerks, and domestic servants.

These figures, it is emphasised, relate only to increases in rates of wages; and do not

take account of increases in actual earnings resulting from fuller employment, increased overtime working, the extension of systems of payment by results, and the transference of workers from relatively low-paid to higher-paid occupations and industries. Statistics published in the November and December numbers of the "Ministry of Labour Gazette" (and already reproduced in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE) indicated, it is added, that, between the outbreak of the war to July, 1940, "the average increase in actual earnings was considerably greater than that in rates of wages."

The article goes on to give details of some of the increases in wage rates in individual industries. During 1940 alone, wages of adult coal miners were advanced by 1s. 2d. a shift; of male chemical workers by from 1½d. to 3d. an hour; of adult workers in the engineering and shipbuilding industries by 5s. a week; of wool textile operators by between 15 and 16 per cent; of cotton trade workers by 11½ per cent (preparing and spinning sections) and 19 per cent (manufacturing section), making a total increase for both sections of 25 per cent since the outbreak of war; of boot and shoe trade workers by 9s. a week for men and 6s. a week for women; of transport workers by from 7s. to 8s. 6d. a week; and so on.

It is probably true that the earnings of many small shopkeepers and of some classes of professional and clerical workers have not increased since the outbreak of war, and may have fallen, while there are possibly large numbers of dependents of men serving with the Forces whose incomes have fallen. It is impossible to generalise about this, however. In many areas, the influx of refugees, of factory workers, and of troops, has swollen the takings of shopkeepers, despite the operation of rationing and of the limitation of supplies order, while numbers of women have been freed by the absence of their husbands and children to take well-paid work in munitions and other factories. On the whole, therefore, it can safely be said that the bulk of the ratepayers are doing better out of the war than are local government officers, and that there is no justification for withholding a bonus to officers on the grounds of unequal sacrifice or local poverty. Moreover, there need be no question of people who have suffered loss of income through the war having to contribute to a bonus to municipal staffs, since local authorities have power to remit or excuse altogether payment of rates in cases of genuine hardship.

If branches advancing bonus claims will make proper use of these facts, we should hear no more of the stupid and misleading talk of impoverished ratepayers being forced to keep a "privileged" class of "sheltered" officials in "well-paid idleness."

What is Wrong with NALGO?

The article by "Critic" in last month's LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, dealing with recent criticisms of NALGO, putting forward some of his own, and making suggestions for future reorganisation, has aroused considerable interest among members. Here, and on the next four pages, we publish a selection of the many comments received. It should be emphasised, of course, that, while some of the writers are branch officers, all are writing as individuals and expressing purely personal views.

WE CAN REACH OUR GOAL—ALONE

From JOHN L. ROBSON, secretary of the Birkenhead branch.

NALGO is suffering criticism to-day because of defects in its structure which might have been removed in peace-time had its members made a real effort. But then, most were prepared to make the best of slow-moving machinery, whilst others sought only to obtain all the benefits without themselves making any contribution. Expediency has invariably been allowed to govern policy. Branches, rather than support and fight for main principles, have pursued selfish motives and weakened their own bargaining power. Now, the weakness has become so obvious that those very people who have been prepared to sacrifice national policy, seek to obtain supposed power from an outside organization.

Let us be honest in demanding that, first and foremost, shall come a national scale of salaries and uniform conditions. That has been NALGO policy for some years now. Its achievement has not been possible because there has been no central negotiating machinery. Whitleyism has not found favour with a sufficient number of branches or local authorities. NALGO has tried to secure compulsory Whitleyism, and has achieved notable success in the voluntary establishment of a National Whitley Council, and constituent bodies in the provinces. But, lacking Government support for compulsory machinery, it has had to content itself with ministerial good wishes.

T.U.C. Affiliation Would Split NALGO

That is not enough for most of us. As a result, expediency arises in another guise—affiliation to the T.U.C. This tendency is viewed with grave apprehension by those of us who have grown up with the association, who have worked unceasingly for years in building up a professional organization which would benefit members and the public they serve. It does not seem to be generally recognized that we are, or should be, in the public service for public service.

We are a professional organization, and must remain so. We have in our ranks high executives and routine clerical workers. It is our pride that we have been able to reconcile a variety of interests and to formulate policy which is in the interest of every member, whatever his position in the service.

Unlike a trade union, which is, and must be, concerned with its own industrial and political security, we are concerned with the lives of the people. The administration of public and social services is entirely in our hands, and, because of this, our associations and judgments must be untrammelled by political or other considerations. Affiliation would mean that we should have to identify ourselves with the aims of the Congress, which are both political and industrial. There is no half-way membership or acquiescence. Inevitably, our association would be split from top to bottom.

Trade unions are treated with respect, and most of their demands seem to be met. It is seldom realized, however, that their power lies, not in their membership of the T.U.C., but in the strike weapon. Can any sane member of our association imagine NALGO ever going on strike. Will anyone seriously suggest that we should even contemplate such action? The day on which it became possible for local government officers to withdraw their labour would be a sorry day for England.

We are urged to play our part in breaking down social barriers and class distinctions. In almost the same voice, we are told that we should join the T.U.C. because then Labour members of local authorities would support our claims. Our claims would indeed be poor if they should ever depend on support of that kind—and it implies a low estimate of the character and quality of Labour representatives to suggest that they are in their positions of authority only to secure material benefits for their own supporters.

Were we affiliated to the T.U.C., we could no longer be free agents, we could never give impartial advice on administrative matters, nor could we hope to receive the confidence of the public. We should have "sold our souls for a mess of pottage."

This demand for affiliation takes for granted that there is no alternative. Present developments and legislation do not seem to have made any impression on the minds of some of our members. The Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Order is already bringing new power to NALGO. It is the first approach to compulsory Whitleyism. It is safe to say that, after the war, similar legislation will be promoted, and we shall have the means to secure the salaries and conditions for which we aim. We shall be able to preserve all our material interests and, at the same time, avoid breaking faith with the public. To maintain the confidence of the public in the efficiency, integrity, and character of the local government service must be our aim and highest duty.

Where Branches are Weak

The position of the branch in NALGO's structure may be responsible for this demand for affiliation. The branch lacks power and authority. It is subject to the personal likes and dislikes of its members. Matters of major policy should always be the concern of the national organization. The paid officials of the association should deal with the local authorities, for the branch secretary, however able he may be, is never able to adopt the attitude nor employ the tactics necessary to secure policy. The transfer of jurisdiction from the branch to the N.E.C. should be automatic, and where branches fail to pursue agreed national policy, the association should pursue its own methods. Policy is approved by conference. Is it not absurd, then, to leave the securing of that policy in the hands of branches often, maybe, at variance with the decisions of the majority? Headquarters organization, in co-operation with a widely extended divisional organization, should be responsible for carrying out the instructions of conference.

There is little wrong with the district committee. Its standard of intelligence is far higher than it was even ten-years ago. It demonstrates that some of the "higher ups" are often better members of NALGO than some people think. As a liaison with the branches and the N.E.C. it is of first importance. It is, indeed, strangely complete, in that its geographical boundaries provide the ideal varieties of membership. Types of area and local authorities assist it to define a common policy. It has a peculiar intimacy which is lacking at conference and it can be, and often is, far more vigorous than its national counterpart.

The suggestion that each district committee should have a policy sub-committee or cabinet is excellent, provided that this principle is adopted by the N.E.C., and—most important of all—that its decisions become operative.

The N.E.C. does work efficiently, in spite of its departmentalism, but, as "Critic" suggests, if it were modelled on the pattern of Parliament its power would become more complete and more respected.

The major defect of the N.E.C. lies in the method of electing representatives. This is such a difficult problem that a whole series of articles would be necessary to review alternative methods—not one of which is likely to receive unqualified support.

At present, the larger branches and combinations of branches make true representation impossible. If, for example, Liverpool, Manchester, and Salford agree on support for suitable candidates, then it is almost certain that these candidates will be elected. What is more, if they meet with the approval of the representatives of these large branches, they are likely to hold their seats. Capable men from the smaller and seemingly less important branches seldom, if ever, have a chance unless they are nominated year in and year out. Their only means of "infiltration" is to make themselves a general nuisance at district meetings, supposedly championing the "under dog." They may then get to the executive—but with a grievance, not an earnest desire to co-operate.

The younger members feel that they are being thwarted by these methods. They continue to call for younger representatives, but fail to realize that, though there may be many young and able men willing to serve the association, by the time they have secured sufficient support to break into these collective agreements, they are due for superannuation and have "missed the bus." The re-organization of NALGO must make it possible for the best brains to serve, irrespective of position or favour.

We Must Plan for Peace

Post-war reconstruction will involve a complete change in local administration; economic, social, and cultural development will present problems far greater than many realise and will call for the highest executive and administrative ability. There will be no place for inefficiency. To wait until that time arrives will be fatal. As we insist on planning for victory, so we must insist on planning for peace.

Local government officers have a great responsibility. Duties have devolved on them during the war which were never anticipated, but which have brought them into a far more intimate relationship with the public than was ever thought possible. Public relationship has become a vital force, and must lead to the enhancement of the prestige of the whole service.

The re-organization of local government, therefore, entails present-day planning and NALGO should set up its own Commission to examine the present structure of local government on lines similar to those outlined by "Critic." The constitution of this Commission must not be limited, favour must not be allowed to weigh considerations of membership, and the obtaining of expert outside opinion must be guaranteed.

In this way, NALGO will fulfil its purpose as a professional organization existing and working for the public well-being. No other organization has been privileged to play such an outstanding part in the civic life of our country. No other organization is competent to fulfil its task in the work of national reconstruction. No other professional body is so well fitted to be a cabinet of public opinion.

To plan and work for a revived people, for a great democratic nation, is a privilege never before allowed any national organization.

WE MUST RETAIN OUR DEMOCRACY

From JACK HILL, secretary of the Leicester city branch.

CRICIT'S article contains some home truths and some misstatements. Let me first deal with his justification of the N.E.C.'s refusal to have elections. The point that members should have an opportunity of registering their vote. Even were all the members re-elected, the democratic issue would have been preserved, and that is worth both time and money. "A man will consent to do many things—which he will fight against to the death if they are thrust upon him without his agreement."

The possibility of a conference being cancelled because of enemy action is not a sound argument for its present abandonment. Difficulties, although great, are not insuperable. Many conferences have been held during the war, and more are pending. The outward form of democratic procedure is not merely "pleasant"; it can, and should be, a sign of inward and real democracy, and there is determination abroad that it shall be preserved in N A L G O.

To argue that district committees can accomplish all that an election or conference can is just not true. District committees have varying opinions and frequently disagree with the N.E.C., but lack of co-ordinating machinery between them, and the thoughts of a conference in the offing as the proper place to decide policy, have hitherto quelled any rebellious movements. If the district committees are to do the work of a conference efficiently, drastic overhaul will be necessary, and for that there is not time this year. In any case, the results would never be so satisfactory as a conference.

Advocates of affiliation with the T.U.C. are being generous to the scheme's opponents in asking for a decision this year. It is true that a substantial proportion of members could not vote because they are in the Forces, but if a cross-section of opinion in a branch with a thousand members is any indication, the young members are precisely the people strongest in their demand. The innuendo that affiliation with the T.U.C. would be tantamount to subscribing to Labour Party funds is false.

"Critic's" condemnation of the branches certainly has some justification, and if his charges are not exaggerated, reform must be started without delay. Branch autonomy must go. Policies, after being endorsed, must be put into effect, and no branch should be in a position to sabotage or stifle a sound scheme because it does not appreciate its value, or because it will derive no direct benefit. The N.E.C. should invite suggestions and prepare a comprehensive scheme of reform for submission to conference.

The shortage of whole-time officers is one of

the biggest mistakes made by the association. District organisers stationed all over the country would be a sound investment, paying immediate dividends. No more divisional offices are needed; the work of organisers lies in frequent contact with branch officers, executive committees, and ordinary members, and they could work from their homes. The organisers should be young men with personality and drive to "ginger up" branch administration. They should be instructed to inquire into the non-return of summary sheets, questionnaires, and the like; pressure of work by branch officers is no excuse for slackness.

An important point, causing disaffection, is the fact that so many local government officers are unwilling to join N A L G O or any other trade union, and so ride on the backs of their more far-seeing colleagues towards the ideals in which we believe and which eventually will be attained. It is, perhaps, early to introduce the words "closed shop" into the service, but the underlying principle behind the phrase is sound. There are many black sheep in all professions and trades who will not join in the good work until they are compelled.

LOCAL AUTONOMY CANNOT GO YET

From W. BARKER, former editor, Manchester "Guild Journal."

"Critic" puts his finger upon two apparent faults of N A L G O—severe criticism of the N.E.C. and local autonomy.

The first, though largely unjustified, is a result of the members of the governing body being unknown to most of the voters who elected them. When things do not move as smoothly or as swiftly as we should wish, it is easy to blame an impersonal body of which we could rarely name more than two or three members. Nor are we likely to elect a body conforming more to our ideas while, in the absence of election addresses, we know nothing of new candidates whose names appear on the voting papers. Is it surprising, then, that the "Old Gang" continues to be elected year after year, and is that in itself complete proof that the membership generally is satisfied?

"Critic" is right in saying that most of the major policies of recent years designed to benefit the rank and file have been launched by the N.E.C. So they should be. The N.E.C. has the benefit of sources of information and expert advice not readily enjoyed by the branches, but it must surely be admitted that the proddings administered by branch delegates at past conferences have not always been ineffective, and on many occasions suggestions from the floor have been adopted as official

Administrative reforms, coupled with the possibility of paying affiliation fees to the T.U.C., will naturally mean larger subscriptions, but I agree with "Critic" when he says that we have had trade unionism on the cheap. It is possible, however, that the kind of trade unionism we have had has not been worth more than we are paying. We have been regarded from outside and inside not as a trade union—there are N A L G O members to-day who are not even aware that we are a trade union—but as a pleasant and innocuous staff association with useful ancillaries, and our main policies have tended to be hidden by these activities which are of secondary importance.

The proposed planning commission is sound, and Leicester is already at work. This, in the main, is a long-term policy, and other reforms must be effected before a commission has published its findings.

Reform and reconstitution must come, and the sooner the better. Many die-hards will be shocked, but if they cannot agree with new policies they will have to go. The dead wood must be cut out to promote and permit new and vigorous growth; otherwise the result will be inevitable—barrenness, withering, and death.

MORE ORGANISERS ESSENTIAL

From L. G. COPUS, secretary of the Leyton branch

"Critic's" support, and criticism, of the N.E.C., his indictment of certain branches, and his revealing remarks about the lack of organisers, are clear statements of fact with which few will quarrel. Undoubtedly more strength is needed on the staff at headquarters, whether as administrators or as organisers, and there is no question that, if the association's policy is to be respected and supported by local authorities up and down the country, both branches and members must be prepared and willing to support it to the fullest possible extent.

With regard to the constitution of the N.E.C., your contributor has hit the nail on the head. What would be the change in the membership of the N.E.C. if an election were held?—practically nil. In many branches it is hard work getting members to vote; to many, most of the candidates are unknown, and of those who trouble to vote many rely

solely on the opinion expressed by branch officers. This opinion usually expresses views formed at meetings of the district committee and may, or may not, correctly assess a candidate's ability.

The theme outlined in the last paragraph of the article has much to commend it. Local government does need reconstructing, and in its reconstruction N A L G O should play its part. In that reconstruction, many of N A L G O's problems, such as small authorities unable to pay reasonable salaries, might disappear. Let the N.E.C. consider this suggestion. If a planning commission can be set up, then N A L G O should support it to the full, for out of the commission's findings may emerge the type of local authority best suited not only for efficient and economic administration, but also best suited to the needs of the people and to the needs of the local government officer.

It should be remembered, too, that in the larger branches, in which the desire to manage their own local affairs is most keen, the employing authorities are often in a position to offer salary scales a little above those of smaller areas, in partial recognition, perhaps, of a high standard in their junior entrants' examinations and of a progressive policy of post-entry training, and to some degree of a higher local cost of living and of the need to compete for recruits with commerce, banking, and insurance. It is the fear that, while local government remains unreformed, their standards will be lowered rather than those of less fortunate areas raised, which prevents some of the larger branches giving whole-hearted support to Whitleyism, and which, together with a fear of losing their autonomy, causes the staff associations of two of the largest authorities to view with a wary eye suggestions that they should join N A L G O.

To find a solution should set a pretty problem for such a planning commission as "Critic" suggests, but it is obvious that, with the reform of local government, and the spreading of the cost of services over areas perhaps within the financial limits of the present police and education authorities, most of N A L G O's troubles will disappear. That may be one beneficial effect of the conflict.

DEMOCRATISE - OR - DECAY!

From "JACKASS" (H. NORTON, chairman of the Sheffield branch).

"CRITIC'S" article contains much argument that is superficially convincing but basically unsound. Particularly thoughtless is his suggestion that, because NALGO elections usually end in the re-appointment of the former council they are unnecessary, and that conferences content to refer everything to the council serve no purpose.

Elections held as ours have been are certainly futile. Members faced with the task of choosing from a list of unknowns whose policies and intentions are well-kept secrets resort to alphabetical order (to be called Allen, Archibald, or Armitage is worth hundreds of votes), use a pin, or play for safety by re-electing the existing members. Sufficient adopt the last method to give the sitting member an unearned advantage. How can an intelligent member take an interest in electing representatives without knowing which candidates share his opinions?

An election held after every candidate had been permitted to express his beliefs and main objects in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE would be a very different proposition. Let NALGO hold a *real* election, and if the existing council were returned almost unchanged there might be some substance in "Critic's" justification of autocracy.

As for conferences, we have yet to hold one in such a way that serious problems can be given the attention they deserve. Whose fault was it that an entire session was given over to preliminary formalities: that speakers were allowed to waste precious time supporting motions obviously acceptable or of such slight import that lengthy debate was unnecessary; that motions involving vital points of policy figured so suspiciously often at the end of a long agenda, even formal alterations to rules being given precedence?

Give us conferences with no time wasted in formal courtesies, a presidential address printed and circulated instead of being spoken, no stump speeches from visiting M.P.'s, and with fixed periods allotted to each item of agendas on which major issues are given first place and most time. When such conferences fail, but not until, the council will have reason to dispense with them. Let me remind "Critic" that, but for successive conferences, NALGO would now count a preferential trading scheme among the ancillaries he rightly regards as occupying too much of headquarters' attention.

His statement that the district committees provide adequate machinery to serve the democratic purposes of an annual conference is simply not true. I am a member of a district committee—which held one meeting only last year, the annual meeting. Like most annual meetings, its agenda was a mass of reports, accounts, and confirmations of months-old minutes.

Finally, his contention that the men we "elected" in 1939 are likely to be the best available now should not pass unchallenged. Parliament found its peacetime leaders unsuited to the problems of war. Parliament changed its Cabinet, but NALGO's parliament—the annual conference—cannot even assemble, much less change its council.

What is wrong with NALGO? Apathy!—the inevitable apathy of members who have no real voice in its affairs, who have never had an opportunity to appoint leaders they know

to be truly representative of their opinions and pledged to carry out their wishes. Apathy among the young men whose advent would have invigorated the council but who found that only by the slow passage of time, which blunts vigorous idealism into cautious realism, could they become sufficiently widely-known to secure election.

The N.E.C. has always been too vague and distant a body to interest our members, few of whom could name five of their fifty-two "representatives." By its autocratic actions, the council has withdrawn further from us. Unless it repents, and makes a sincere effort to introduce genuinely democratic control, we may eventually forget its existence.

Or we may remember the axiom of democracy—no taxation without representation—and that dictators have no claim to loyalty unless they can enforce it. We may, out of sheer apathy, or because we have no constitutional method of effective protest, cease to pay our subscriptions.

And where would poor NALGO be then, poor thing?

UNION - OR - FRIENDLY SOCIETY?

From H. TOWNSHEND-ROSE, public relations correspondent, Brentford and Chiswick branch.

NALGO is one of the best friendly societies there is. Its insurance and provident benefits, its camps and holiday centres, and its building society, are of inestimable value to members. Its cheap trading facilities are a first-class grievance for the active and retired tradesmen who, for the most part, are the lords and masters of the local government officer. As a trade union, however, NALGO has yet to be welded into an effective instrument of bargaining.

Some consolation may perhaps be derived from the recognition given to the association by the Government departments, but there is danger in being beguiled by the suave and practised technique of those departments in handling deputations. More substantial, if less palatable, food for thought is to be found in the attitude of the associations of local authorities to the National Arbitration Order. Whatever the strength of life at the centre of the association, there are symptoms of acute anaemia at the extremes, evidenced by the number of local authorities which disregard such vital matters as Whitleyism, cost-of-living bonus, and war pay. Local authorities which would not think of deciding a matter concerning their workmen without first ascertaining the views of the appropriate trade

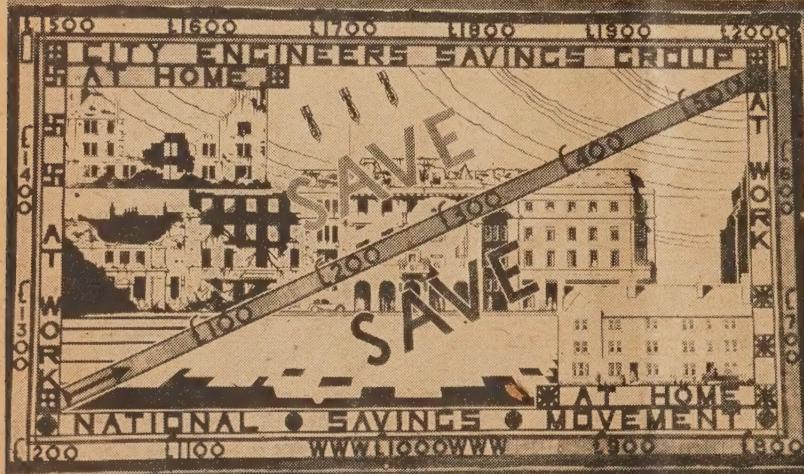
union, arrive at decisions concerning their officers (such as the truncation of holidays) with a blithe disregard of their contractual liabilities. The truth is that thousands of councillors have never heard of NALGO. For many authorities it just doesn't exist.

"Critic" has drawn attention to the principal defects in NALGO, and few would dispute his general conclusions or disagree with his recommendations for the establishment of a policy sub-committee and planning commission. On the whole, there is not much wrong with the structure of NALGO, and if members do not get the N.E.C. they want, they have only themselves to blame.

One radical change which might be considered is the exclusion of chief officers from membership, though with provision for the preservation of their interests in the providence, insurance, and similar sections. The relation of chief officer to staff is inevitably that of employer to employed, and it is difficult to see what community of interest there can be between, say, the chief financial officer of a county council, and a score of £200-a-year clerks in his department, most of whom he rarely sees. The influence of chief officers tends to be out of proportion to their number, and not all of them would take kindly to juniors who pressed for improvements which their chiefs considered undesirable.

Were NALGO to be organised in the best possible way, is there any guarantee that it would be much more effective than it is today? Probably not. The character of institutions is determined by the individuals who compose them, and the local government officer is not noticeably better than his fellow men. Unfortunately, many of us are members of NALGO for what we can get out of it in the way of cheap benefits, or because we cannot very well do otherwise than pay our annual contributions. There is never likely to be any real drive in a body which has the function of a trade union and hasn't a more enthusiastic backing than that. The average member has no sense of community with the general body of local government officers. Who ever heard of a branch which was prepared to lose something for the sake of the common good?

Somehow or other we have got to learn to put aside personal and sectional interests. We have got to be enthusiastic for NALGO for the common good of all members, and to see to it that NALGO in turn makes its contribution to the common good of all. If we can get that spirit into the association we may begin to get somewhere. If not, tinkering about with the constitution isn't going to save us.



This striking poster, designed by Mr. James Deuchars, A.R.I.B.A., of the city engineer's department, Dundee, was prominently displayed during Dundee's war weapons week recently. It shows The City Chambers and a local housing estate, "blitzed" on one side and intact on the other. Mr. J. B. Thomson, city collector and president of the Dundee branch, was publicity convener for the campaign.

APATHY IN THE MIDDLE RANKS

From T. W. MASLEN, secretary of the Coventry branch

"Critic" set out to tell us what is wrong with NALGO—he tells us what is right with the N.E.C. Here are some weaknesses in NALGO in which members ought to be interested. Branch executive committees lack the support and interest of men in middle positions of the service—men always with years of experience, and men often with only cushy jobs in their authority. Chief officials and junior officers are both far-sighted enough to serve on executive and sub-committees. Why are the middle men so apathetic? "Critic" shows that the membership of N.E.C. is nearly constant. Why, then, is there an endless clamour about the suspension of E.C. elections? Let NALGO hold its next election when the House of Commons goes to the country. Has any of our noisy muckrakers written to his M.P. protesting at his voting for himself £600 a year for the irrigation?

Further, is it not time that the solemn farce as ended of direct election by the rank and file to the N.E.C. of members quite unknown to them? How many times have I been asked, "Who do you wish me to vote for, Mr. Secretary?" The first post-war reform in NALGO should be election of the N.E.C. by card vote of district committee members; then we may see some new faces on the next inference platform.

The annual report is another weakness. Indeed, it has to serve the dual purpose of a members' NALGO handbook and of a inference guide; it should, nevertheless, be basically overhauled. The descriptive matter (the worst committee minute reportage) is obviously redundant as one reads through the work of executive committees. The statistical table so regularly lacks any basis of comparison that I have long since concluded that it is designed to mislead rather than to inform.

If the N.E.C. is to act more wisely on the subject of T.U.C. affiliation than it did in 1936, members should be clearly told what NALGO has to lose by becoming an affiliated trade union.

The voice of inexperience cries out against heads of departments in NALGO; this seems to me a singularly ungracious tribute to the work done for the association by chiefs of staff and the N.E.C. Is a loyal member of many years standing to be cast out from the date on which he achieves his promotion?

LET'S BE REAL TRADE UNIONISTS

From GERALD NETHERCOT, City Development Officer, Leicester

"Critic" is a candid friend, but I think he would be more in favour of T.U.C. affiliation than he appears to be if he had had as much experience of other professional organisations and semi-trade unions as I have. I have seen decaying growths, feeble and ineffectual, rejuvenated by affiliation; the weight of the authority of the T.U.C. has given them a moral tonic, and quite suddenly has filled them with fight.

"Critic's" comments on the kind of autonomy exercised by some branches, leading them to rank disobedience, are merited, but surely affiliation, with the discipline that would necessarily ensue, would once and for all put a stop to this sort of thing.

"Critic" is very nearly fair, but in my view lets himself down when he talks of subscriptions to the funds of the Conservative party, using this as an analogy for T.U.C. affiliation. I am sure he did not mean it quite in the way it read to me—for heaven's sake, let us be real trade unionists. Those who do not like it, let them get out, say I. We shall be all the better without them.



"Isn't this firewatching marvellous?"

TOO MUCH UNIFORMITY AN EVIL

From W. G. DAVID, secretary of the Glamorgan branch.

ONE could wish that "Critic" had used his space to better advantage, omitting the long treatise on the methods of Dr. Goebbels and the worn-out trick of putting up skittles to show us how quickly he can knock them down. His references to Dr. Goebbels do, however, hint at admiration for German methods, which is borne out later in his admitted desire that the N.E.C. should make branches toe the line.

Edmund Burke, the great parliamentarian, once said:

"In large bodies the circulation of power must be less vigorous at the extremities. Nature has said it. Despotism itself is obliged to truck and huckster . . . The Sultan gets such obedience as he can. He governs with a loose rein, *that he may govern at all*—and the whole of the force and vigour of his authority in his centre is derived from a prudent relaxation in all his borders."

Members of the N.E.C. appear to have adopted Burke's words as a slogan. By "prudent relaxation" they enjoy the confidence of most members, many of whom would revolt under sterner measures.

"Critic" seems a little mixed in his argument. At one moment he calls for stern disciplinary action by the N.E.C., and at another suggests that the district committee should adapt policies to local needs (though, of course, "without challenging their principles"). He should make up his mind, for it is the simple yet complex fact (if he will pardon

the paradox) of the need for local adaptation that makes the loose rein policy a prudent one for NALGO.

Uniformity is the curse of the age. Within the broad framework of a general policy, adapted to meet local conditions, good progress has been and will be made, but as long as we continue as a democracy members will expect and, indeed, demand freedom to voice their objections to rigid regimentation from the centre.

Are there no branches that have secured better conditions and better bonuses than the provincial Whitley councils? Have not some branches secured the making up of war service pay while the provincial Whitley councils and their officers still haggle? Does "Critic" demand that all branches should always wait upon the pace of the slowest, the most timid, the most indifferent to their own welfare?

His conjecture that if an election and a conference were held now, no change would come about, may be the right one. To scrap everything, however, and submit to the rule of a small cabinet, even temporarily, would be to make NALGO akin to a Fascist corporate body—a body of "Yes" men. Discontent, disillusion, and decay would inevitably follow, for as Burke pointed out, it is the freedom of the circumference that gives virility to the centre.

To quote "Critic's" own words, "We cannot do better than the sum of our ~~solidarity~~ good and bad." Let us concentrate on the good.

PLANNING—A JOB FOR NALGO

One of the suggestions made by "Critic" last month, which has aroused especial interest, was that NALGO should form its own Planning Commission to survey local government and make recommendations for its reform and development to meet post-war needs. Here, GERALD NETHERCOT, city development officer, Leicester, and secretary of the reconstruction advisory committee already appointed by the Leicester branch, describes how that body is tackling the job, and indicates what the association as a whole might do, to the benefit of itself and the service.

I HAVE headed this article "A Job for NALGO." It is more than a job merely to be undertaken haphazardly. In my opinion, it is a duty.

Everybody today is getting excited about reconstruction—even the Government, which has appointed a Minister of Reconstruction, who, presumably, will work in close collaboration with the Minister for Works and Buildings.

Now, local government officers can make a real contribution to planned reconstruction—and it is up to us to make our views known to the appropriate authority and to use all the influence we have to see that it is planned, and not just a make-shift affair. Our interest in it is obvious, both from our personal standpoint as officials, and from the standpoint of the life of the community with which we are daily coming into closer contact. A large share of the administration of reconstruction policies will necessarily fall on our shoulders and, therefore, our personal positions are going to be materially affected. Without taking a sectional view at all, the active co-operation and advice of local government officers in general, and of NALGO in particular, is going to provide a golden opportunity to increase our standing, nationally and locally.

The Leicester city branch of NALGO decided some weeks ago to appoint a special reconstructive advisory committee to consider planning and to formulate schemes in all matters directly or indirectly touching upon the local government service.

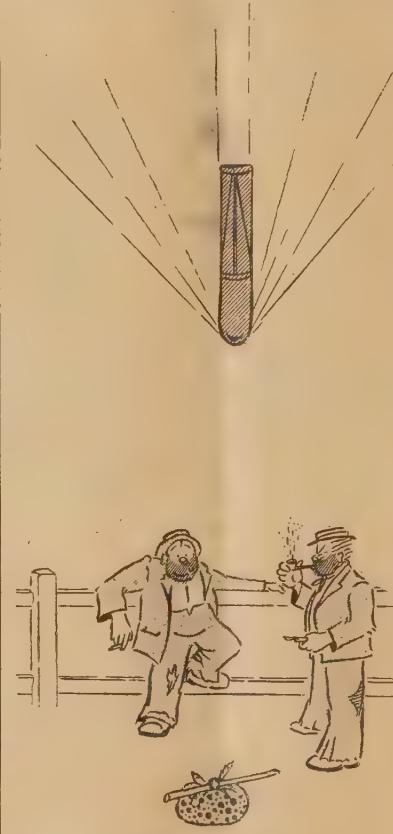
This committee has wide terms of reference, and is attempting to view the problems and changes from the point of view of the community as a whole, and not merely from that of the service. We in Leicester are, indeed, very anxious that no charge of service partisanship should be levelled against us. For this reason we are taking what I believe to be a very sensible course, and one which I should recommend NALGO to adopt nationally.

We have decided to co-operate to the fullest possible extent with the reconstruction survey and planning committee set up by the Nuffield College organisation, which will operate on a national basis. The college is appointing its agents to survey areas all over the country. For instance, in Leicester we come into the area of Leicestershire and Northamptonshire.

We in Leicester are delighted that our move so interested the general secretary of NALGO that he has thought fit to send out a circular to branches setting forth our aims at some length. I hope that branch secretaries will pay close attention to that letter, and will bring it to the notice of their branches at the earliest possible moment. Those branches which wish to ally themselves with Nuffield College in this matter (and the college will, form an admirable independent medium of great standing through which our ideas may be made known) are advised to communicate with the Secretary, Nuffield College Reconstruction Survey, Indian Institute, Broad Street, Oxford. He, no doubt, will advise as to the best course to take in individual areas. There is no doubt that the investigators will seek data, opinion, and ideas from local government officers. Nor is there any doubt that regionalisation will be one of the chief points of interest. There is reason to believe that the Government will take a real interest in the conclusions put forward. So you will see that it is to NALGO's advantage to get in on this

quickly. By doing so, it will be possible to avoid any accusation of partisanship, or that we are attempting to feather our own nest, which might otherwise be made by the un instructed and prejudiced.

I should emphasise that the initiative in Leicester was taken quite off our own bat,



"Lumme, whistles a bit, don't it?"

and did not arise from any information about the work of Nuffield College. It was not until a week or two after we had formed our committee that we were approached by the college investigator for this area, who said that he would welcome our active co-operation. We have accepted this invitation, and we think we are right to do so.

The first job is, of course, to obtain data and information. Having done that, one can proceed to formulate plans. The main duty of the Leicester advisory committee will be to co-ordinate, to act as a receiving house, to constitute itself an examining body, and generally to act as a commission. It is proposing to set up five small panels under the following general heads:

- Housing, town planning, and public health;
- Social welfare and amenities;
- Regionalisation and administration;
- Education;
- Public utility services.

It is not intended that these panels shall necessarily be composed of members of the advisory committee; it will be the job of the committee to invite appropriate people to serve on them. Data and schemes will be forwarded to the right panel for preliminary consideration, and the panel will then report its findings to the main committee.

After that, all plans and documents will be handed over to Nuffield College, and copies sent to any committees which may be set up by the local authority as such, or to other bodies interested.

I want to make it plain that we have aimed at breaking away from the departmental outlook. Members of the committee have not been selected as representatives of a particular department, but on the ground that the branch executive considers them to be the most suitable people to take a broad view. This is rather important, because, at all costs, we want to avoid rivalries and the too-rigid adherence to traditional water-tight compartments. Naturally, the views of any member of a department will be welcomed—not merely those of senior officials. This is, indeed, a great chance for the humblest officer to offer his or her opinions.

We have provisionally suggested that the existing corporation departments shall make their views known to one of the five panels mentioned, and to help members we have attempted a classification of departments under these heads. This is by no means an arbitrary classification, and as it has already been set out in the general secretary's letter, I do not propose to repeat it here. Of course, the Leicester committee is fully aware that the interests of one panel will frequently overlap with those of another, but this can be straightened out in the final consideration when any schemes have matured.

What should be clearly borne in mind by every man and woman in the service is that their individual responsibility is not shelved merely by the appointment of a committee. The committee is the clearing house, and it is from the individuals that we want the ideas. The committee will at the right time fire the bullets; but it is up to the individual officers, talking about their daily jobs to their colleagues, their ideas for the future, yes—and let it be shouted as loudly as possible—their opinions on aspects of local government work with which they have no personal connection in their daily lives, to provide the ammunition.

Let me repeat, with all the emphasis at my command, that NALGO has a real chance here to do a most valuable job of work, and may well, in doing that, strengthen its own position. I want particularly to offer one suggestion for immediate consideration by any local or national committees that may be set up by NALGO, and that is to pay due attention to, and to offer opinion on, the very ticklish matter of regionalisation. This is an immediate problem, and the trend towards regionalisation, which must be obvious to everyone, is something of which we must take heed, is something upon which our views must be clear. We must see that these views reach the right quarters as quickly as possible, for, make no mistake about it, regionalisation is likely to affect every single member of the service in his or her own job. Let me appeal here and now to the National Executive Council to give the fullest consideration, and to take all necessary action on this one point alone. Apart from our own position, it is a vital factor in the whole question of reconstruction administration.

One last word to everybody interested—get away from stereotyped departmental lines of thought. Don't be afraid to strike a new line, or to cut across old traditions. Be as boldly imaginative—dare I say as heretical?—as you can.

ALLANTRY AWARDS TO MEMBERS

are proud to record the following awards made to members of NALGO serving in H.M. Forces and Civil Defence:

GEORGE CROSS

Kenneth Dickinson, R.E., county surveyor's dept., Lancashire county council. The award was made for "conspicuous gallantry in carrying out hazardous work in a very brave manner." It is understood that he was engaged in bomb disposal.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

y, Flt.-Lt. R., R.A.F.,

treasurer's dept.,

ull.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING MEDAL

h, Sgt.-Obs. J., R.A.F., town clerk's dept., sole. Awarded in recognition of "gallantry and devotion to duty in the execution of air operations." He has taken part in many operations over Germany and occupied territory, and had previously been commended for his skill in navigating by bearings from the stars a machine whose instruments had been thrown out of action in an electric storm.

trison, Sgt. S. E., R.A.F. (V.R.), Bulldingdon R.D.C.

lock, Sgt. G. V., R.A.F., member of

Willesden branch.

MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES

andler, Capt. G. H., R.A.O.C., Epsom and Ewell. For distinguished services in the field in France between March and June, 1940.

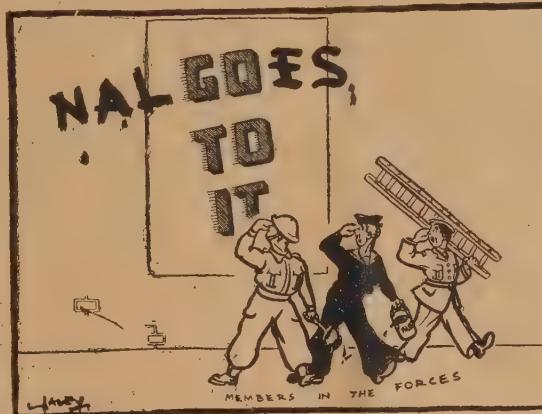
nnett, Lt.-Col. G. T., R.E., county surveyor, Oxfordshire.

GEORGE MEDAL

V. G. Bursnall, 39, superintendent of works at Ruislip and Northwood and staff officer of a rescue party. On September 26, 1940, he helped in rescuing persons trapped under debris in a road. Four days later, at great personal risk, he rescued a woman from a bombed house, and on the following day saved the life of another woman trapped in a damaged building.

olden, Dr. Oscar M., medical officer of health at Croydon, and vice-president of the Croydon branch. When an A.R.P. report centre was demolished by a direct bomb hit, Dr. Holden, at great personal risk, crawled under the wreckage and proceeded,

under the most difficult conditions, to administer morphia to a girl telephonist who had stuck to her post and was trapped. Owing to the confined space, Dr. Holden had to crawl backwards and was in constant danger of being buried.



It is estimated that more than 15,000 NALGO members are now serving in H.M. Forces.

Thomas, Nurse F. M., 36, sanitary inspector, Woolwich. As a member of a mobile hospital unit, Nurse Thomas on several occasions crawled beneath the ruins of demolished buildings, ignoring the imminent danger of being killed by further falls of masonry, to give morphia and food to trapped people, and was directly responsible for saving at least three lives.

O.B.E. (Civil Division)

Johnson, Thomas Arthur, leader of a rescue party, and George Luff, foreman, both members of Gosport branch. For nearly six hours they, with other members of the rescue party, tunneled beneath the unstable debris of a collapsed house to rescue a woman. Mr. Johnson had twice to be pulled out by his companions because he was too exhausted to crawl out.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Roderick, Miss Joan, a member of the Croydon branch. She received a special letter of commendation from the King for her courage when bombs dropped around the A.R.P. mobile canteen of which she was in charge.

NALGO ROLL OF HONOUR

KILLED (Military)

Bennett, L/Sgt. H. J., R.E., electricity accounts dept., Hampstead.

Boett, K. V., R.A.F., London and Home Counties Joint Electricity Authority.

Butterworth, Sgt.-Obs. John, R.A.F., health dept., Bury C.B. Killed in action.

Ferryfield, John E. C., R.A., local taxation office, Portsmouth. Killed in action during air raid on Portsmouth.

Matthew, A/C E. T., R.A.F., 29, borough treasurer's dept., Barking. Died of pleurisy while on active service.

ewell, J. K., R.A.F., electricity showroom collector, Portsmouth. Killed in air crash.

ildman, Surgeon-Lt. R.N.V.R., 32, asst. M.O.H., Norfolk C.C. Killed on active service.

Wilson, F. H., R.A.P.C., surveyor's dept., Shrewsbury C.C. Died after bombing of ship in which he was leaving France.

Vray, Sub-Lt. W., Fleet Air Arm, Willesden branch. Killed in action.

* Previously reported missing.

MISSING

Law, Sgt.-Gnr. A. E., R.A.F., borough treasurer's dept., Southport.

McLean, Sgt.-Pilot A. I., R.A.F. (V.R.), 21, borough treasurer's dept., Brighton. Missing from air operations in Libya.

Smith, Sgt.-Pilot D., R.A.F., engineering assistant, city engineer's dept., Portsmouth. Reported missing on flight over the North Sea.

Stallwood, Ord. Coder F., R.N., Willesden branch. Reported missing, believed killed.

PRISONERS OF WAR

Pte. C. W. Rout, Lt. R. N. Sanders, Capt. H. S. Walker and Pte. E. J. Woodland, all reported prisoners in last month's list, were employees of Berkshire county council, not of Reading C.B., as was stated.

KILLED (Civilian)

Masters, R. J., 33, electricity slot-meter collector, Portsmouth. Killed by D.A. bomb explosion.

DIPLOMA IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The examination for the London Univ. D.P.A. can now be taken by candidates who (1) have passed or obtained exemption from London Matriculation; or (2) have obtained a School Certificate or some recognised equivalent qualification and have for two years held an approved appointment in a Public Office. Attendance at University classes is not necessary; candidates can prepare for the exam. at home in their leisure hours. The Diploma is increasing in importance as a qualification for those engaged in local government service.

WOLSEY HALL POSTAL COURSES

Wolsey Hall prepares candidates for D.P.A. Examinations by means of up-to-date postal courses drawn up and individually conducted by highly-qualified graduate tutors. A Guarantee is given that in the event of failure, tuition will be continued free of charge. At the 1940 Examination (Extension Scheme) 5 of the 6 Wolsey Hall Candidates were successful.

FREE PROSPECTUS
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Wolsey Hall, Oxford

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Littledean Guest House, Littledean, Glos. Beautifully situated, 600 ft. altitude. Eighty rooms; 21 acres. Billiards, dancing, lawn games, golf, organised entertainments. Board Res. 55/- to 70/- Illustrated prospectus "W. G." free.

MISCELLANEOUS

BET TALLER!! —Quickly!! Safely!! Privately!! Ross System Never Fails. Fee £2.2s. complete. Details 6d. stamp: MALCOLM ROSS, Height-Specialist, BM/HYTHE, LONDON, W.C.1.

LITERARY

WRITE FOR PROFIT in Spare Time. —The ideal wartime hobby. Send for free booklet. —Regent Institute (190G), Palace Gate, W.8.

RADIO

Bankrupt Bargains, GENUINE OFFER. Brand new 1939-40 models, makers' sealed cartons, fully guaranteed at 25% off present prices; also portable midgents. Send 1d. stamp lists. **Radio Bargains, Dept. L.G.S., 261-3, Lichfield Road, Aston, Birmingham.**



"BOMBS RAINED ON THE HOSPITAL"

By LEONARD S. RICHARDSON

ONE by one the ward lamps are extinguished, leaving only the dim radiance of night lights. The hospital prepares to endure the night, its nursing staff watching by the bedsides of the sick and dying, while overhead the terror of the Nazi winged death drones on. In a small building, an adjunct of the steward's office, a group of men waits at action station, ready to meet any emergency. The night "blitz" is in progress, and anything may happen, so, with axes, belts, and gumboots on, and steel helmets at hand, they await the worst Jerry may send, whiling away the time with a quiet game of cards. Things have been unpleasant tonight, unlimited gunfire being mixed with an occasional "whoosh" in the distance. Fires are blazing across the skyline, so, with two companions, I decide to go on the roof to report how the attack is developing. Danger seems imminent.

Not three hundred yards away, as we stand on the roof, we see a row of buildings ablaze, with firemen, silhouetted against the background of flames, trying to cope with the rapidly spreading inferno. We telephone "Control," that things are far from good—all squads had better stand to—then we start the return to ground. Halfway down the last flight, an unmistakable whistle sounds. We dive down the few remaining stairs, and flatten ourselves on the ground. The building rocks, but seems still to be intact. The wards in the immediate vicinity do not appear to have suffered any material damage. We run out of the nearest door, close to the operating theatre, to find ourselves ankle-deep in water. The bomb has fallen not thirty yards from us, hitting the static water tank.

Together we scramble back into the corridor to the nearest telephone to report to Control, then we continue down the corridor to our room. A few steps, however, and we fall to earth again. This time there is no doubt about it—we have been hit. Showers of glass pour in down the whole length of the quarter-mile long corridor. We get to our feet somewhat shaken and I find myself shouting: "Put the lights out." The blackout curtains are in ribbons, and lights are an obvious target.

As we run down the corridor, a great partition of wood with ominous splinters of glass fall in towards us, but we dodge, grab it and fling the whole thing out into the great hall. Under our feet, showers of glass continue to fall. Still, however, the walls are intact and we can breathe again. Not for long, though. I can hear a dull boom. This time the whole floor of the hall is showered with incen-

diary bombs pours upon us. By this time we have arrived back at action station, so we join the others in a mad rush from one building to the next, stamping on them, covering them with earth, and using stirrup pumps.

I see one man vainly trying to dislodge a burning bomb from under the sandbag framework against a window. Then, without thought of personal injury, he seizes it with his hands and flings it on the grass outside the window. That fire is quickly extinguished. Another group forms a human bucket chain up the side of the building, while a comrade crawls up the roof to a bomb lodged on the tiles. Two buckets of sand and it is out; the gang is ready for the next one. For a hectic half hour we rush from one point to the next, scarcely noticing that other H.E. bombs have fallen during that time. In the Control room the telephone rings.

"Control?"

"Speaking."

"The maids' home has been hit."

"I'll send someone over."

Control rings action station.

"Action station? The maids' home has been hit. Send a squad over right away."

"Sorry, all men are out. I'll send a squad the moment I can get one together."

"All right. No casualties as yet."

Control rings off. Action station sends a messenger out to get together a squad. The telephone rings again.

"Action station?"

"Speaking."

"This is Miss — speaking from the maids' home. We have been hit. Can you send someone over?"

The voice, though shaky, is under control. But action station knows there are more than twenty maids in the home and something must be done. His men have not yet reported back, so he tries to be cheerful.

"The men are on their way, Miss —. Is the damage serious?"

"Not badly hurt as far as we know, but we don't know what the building's like, as we have not been outside. . . . All right, the engineer's here, with a party of men."

Action station breathes a sigh of relief. If the engineer is there, his troubles are over as far as the maids' home is concerned, at any rate until the morning. One by one, the men come streaming back into the room to await further instructions. We have finished our job and feel hot and tired. The time is just

four o'clock, but sleep is not for us. The telephone rings again, and we all cluster round expectantly.

"Action station? The police report one of the bombs that landed in front of block 'B' was a delayed action. We shall need every man for stretcher duty. Three hundred patients to be evacuated to the other end of the hospital. Dr. — will superintend the arrangements for getting the patients to bed again. Get the stretchers from casualty."

There is no lack of volunteers. We pair off, and the long, tedious succession of trips from one end of the hospital to the other begins. Through broken glass we trudge, in pitch blackness. Fortunately, I have my torch, but this must be used sparingly with so many windows out.

At last we have completed the evacuation and taken the drugs and all portable gear to a safe place from the casualty ward. The raid is not yet over, but around us the fires are gradually being got under control. A welcome cup of tea arrives, and we suddenly realise that dawn is breaking. Sitting upright in chairs, worn out with fatigue, we snatch an hour's sleep, while the bombers still drone above. What is that? The alarm clock No. 1, it is the all-clear signal, heralding a welcome morning.

A hasty conference is held and it is decided to evacuate 600 of our 900 patients, as the area no longer seems safe. Partially refreshed by our brief nap, we wait patiently for the arrival of the fleet of buses that is coming. We eat a lightning breakfast, then hear that the first coaches have arrived. We go to the receiving wards, where cases are being docketed, labelled, and made ready for the journey by scores of nurses, many of whom have had no sleep during the night, or have just come off night duty.

The evacuation proceeds in an orderly and rapid manner until, by one o'clock, we learn that no more are going today. It is Sunday, although we have hardly had time to realise the fact. The hospital has licked its wounds, we have survived a night of hectic bombing without a single casualty, and now the relief A.R.P. squad has arrived. I think we all did the same thing. Home as quickly as possible—a meal, then a bed which called so loudly that, by comparison, a siren beside it would have been a whisper.

So we prepare for tomorrow night, the next, and whatever they may bring. The hospital has come through its first ordeal, and whatever Adolf's myrmidons may do, we shall be on duty until he stops us by force—still smiling.

*To the Officers and Members of the
National Association of Local Government Officers*



HELP THE COUNTRY BY HELPING THE WAR SAVINGS CAMPAIGN

YOU, as an active member of N.A.L.G.O., are the man best suited to point out to your fellow workers the vital importance of War Savings.

There are already 90,000 Savings Groups in Industry and Commerce over 6,000 of these being in the Local Government Services. All are contributing splendidly. But even greater efforts are needed... and this is how you can help.

Advise your friends, if they are not already in a Savings Group, to decide how much, with a bit extra effort, they can put by every week and then to see the Group Secretary about joining.

Where the member is already subscribing to a Group, try to get him to increase his subscription.

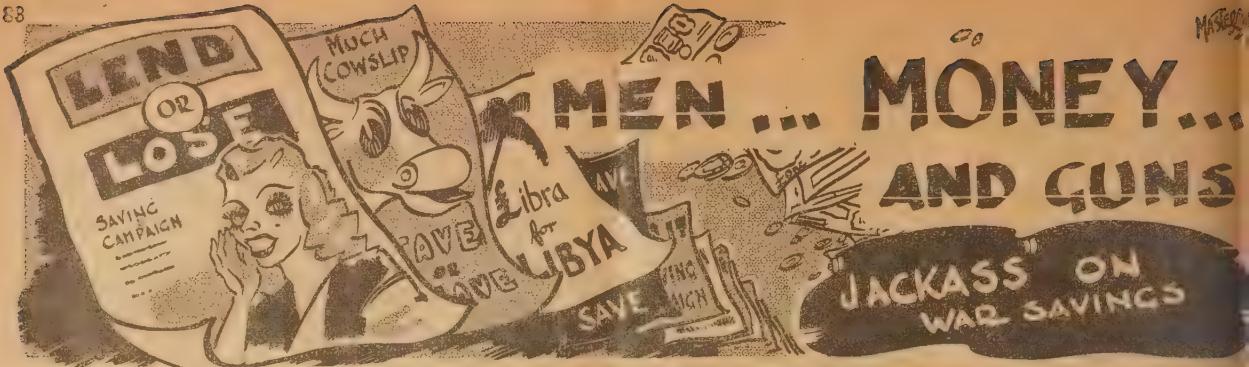
If a Group does not exist, see about forming one.

TELLING POINTS ON WAR SAVINGS

- 1 Emphasize Saving as the great need of the country in time of War.
- 2 Explain that we cannot at the same time have weapons for our fighting men and satisfy all our personal needs.
- 3 Point out what the other Departments are doing—don't let your friends lag behind.
- 4 Point out how valuable these Savings will be when Peace is restored.
- 5 Tell your friends of the interest their Savings will earn. Explain that War Savings are the safest form of investment.
- 6 Say, too, how easy it is to save on pay day through your Savings Group.

BEGIN THE GOOD WORK TO-DAY

ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL SAVINGS COMMITTEE · LONDON



PRO BONO PUBLICO, Citizel, Only a Ratepayer, and Sack the Lot will scarcely need telling that nothing could be more repugnant to a normal local government officer (if such there be) than saving money. Accustomed from youth to squandering other people's cash in a divine frenzy on whatever wildcat scheme appeals for the moment, and to pouring out our own inflated salaries like treacle, few of us can save without a shudder. Which explains why a council budget-day usually finds the local staff quivering like aspic . . . or is it aspens ?

When the Clerk first approached me about organising a National Savings Campaign in Much Cowslip, I followed my usual technique of listening attentively, agreeing subserviently, making copious notes, and forgetting all about it when he returned to his office. For three months nothing happened ; then Lady Prendergorgo Azuregore Bloodworthy arrived. Lady Prendergorgo, a local Brigadier-General's daughter who joined the A.T.S. as a humble volunteer yet in two days rose by sheer ability to the rank of Commandant, told Blatherpatch that she wished to see the Clerk on behalf of the mothers of Much Cowslip. Blatherpatch, anxious to give the Clerk some details, asked deferentially how many mothers were involved and their names. Striking an attitude and narrowly missing his nose, she retorted that they should be nameless yet their name was legion. Quite out of his depth, Blatherpatch announced her as representing " an unspecified number of anonymous mothers," and left it at that.

Judging from what we heard through the baize-covered door, she actually represented a committee consisting of herself, Councillor Mrs. Gauche, the Vicar's wife, and Mrs. Gumble, who were jointly and severally ashamed of the insignificant contribution Much Cowslip was making to the national war effort. Sweeping aside the Clerk's protestations, she demanded the inauguration of a Savings Campaign. She was aware that the Clerk was a busy man. She was aware that his staff were hardly the type to make a success of anything beyond issuing ridiculous little notices about drains, but she was driven to realise that a campaign such as she visualised could be directed only from the council office.

Polytely but firmly, the Clerk explained that his staff were so busily occupied in acknowledging, interpreting, and filing the daily batches of statutory rules and regulations that they could not possibly undertake further duties not strictly within their province. With a patient smile, Lady Bloodworthy mentioned that Councillor Mrs. Gauche was a member of her committee. Even more politely than before, the Clerk observed that, though he could not undertake to organise, he had no objection to his staff assisting in their leisure time. Still not satisfied, she remarked inconsequently that the wife of Councillor Gumble was also on her committee, and the Clerk capitulated. He agreed to detail two of his ablest assistants to do all that was required.

Outside the door, his two ablest assistants

—already rather tired of mixing business with leisure—groaned in unison, while the fair Bloodworthy bade him an effusive good-bye. Hardly had she left the building when the Clerk sent for us and told us we were temporarily " seconded " (martialse for transferred) to the War Savings Committee. He knew we would realise that our ordinary duties must not be neglected.

Blatherpatch and I resolved that, as we had to do the job, we would do it thoroughly. Naturally, our official minds turned first to the issue of a leaflet appealing to the public to co-operate, though long experience should have convinced us that the only result would be to worsen the paper shortage. The public, that vast amorphous almost jelly-like substance which officialdom always seeks to mould but often has to stamp on, remained unmoved. So we followed with a poster campaign.

Our slogans were certainly an advance on anything previously employed. A life-sized study of Shirley Temple inscribed " YOUR MONEY OR HER LIFE," sent every confirmed bachelor and resigned spinster scurrying to the Post Office for savings stamps. " SAVE OR SLAVE " appealed most to overworked housewives who never had a free moment in any case. " LIBRA FOR LIBYA " adopted for its classical appeal, evoked only sniggers from the educated, but brought others in buying stamps to find out what it meant. A splendid caricature of Dr. Goebbels, sub-titled " SIXPENCE A



"the aid of Miss Purl, the postmistress . . ."

DAY KEEPS THE DOCTOR AWAY amused but brought no business, but the simplest of them all—" LEND OR LOSE "—proved very effective and reduced even Councillor McIsaacs to such a chronic state of indecision that he spent hours walking up and down outside the Post Office. We felt so sorry for him that one night during the blackout we set his mind at rest by clubbing him neatly, rifling his pockets, investing the proceeds in Savings Bonds, and posting them to him in hospital.

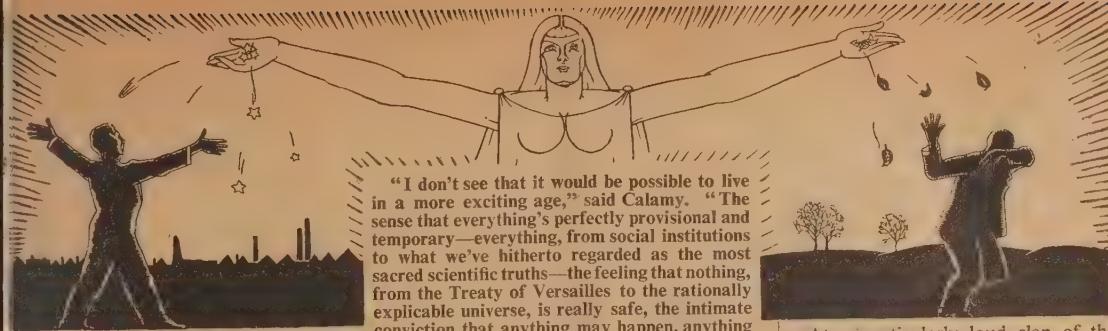
After a while, however, the appeal of the posters diminished and we realised that more elaborate steps were necessary. Deciding that a first essential was that the staff should set an example, we called a meeting. Held during official hours to ensure a good attendance, it resulted in the staff enthusiastic pledging themselves to save not less than half of any increase in salary which could be obtained for them. Thus armed, I went to the council, pleading that the patriotic desire of the staff to share in the national savings effort should not be thwarted by short-sighted parsimony on the part of the council. Councillor Mrs. Gauche and Mrs. Gumble (via Councillor Gumble) gave solid support, and before the council quite knew what they were doing, they had awarded an all-round increase of ten per cent in salaries. I had the pleasure and privilege of announcing this amid thunderous applause to my colleagues, who not only confirmed their undertaking to invest half the increase for the duration but also presented me with a solid gold cigarette case containing no fewer than ten full-sized cigarettes. A sense of justice impelled us to follow precedent by excluding from this compulsory savings scheme all officers earning more than £300 per annum, but as only the Clerk was actually affected the savings income was not seriously affected.

Obviously, I could not employ the same technique to the general public, whose income was beyond my power to control. So I resorted to applied psychology. It was essential that more and still more of those hoarded gold pieces, smelling faintly of stockings, should flow across the Post Office counter. Inspiration came to us from seeing a queue for pig-trotters which caused Blatherpatch to remark how scarcity of any commodity caused those who in normal times never wanted it to rush into the market.

We went to work cautiously, beginning with a column in the *Buttercup Advertiser* declaring that there was definitely no shortage of savings stamps or certificates. The response was slight, but encouraging upward trend in sales. Next, we announced that, though there was no actual shortage, temporary difficulties might arise in certain localities owing to transport dislocation, and urged the public not to buy more than their fair share. Rationing, we added, was not contemplated.

Immediately, sales soared, and a short but definite queue developed at rush periods. We realised it was time to enlist the aid of

(Continued on next page)



Arnold, the producer, was called to telephone recently. A voice said: "that Mr. Tom Arnold ?" "es ; what do you want ?" "an you fix me up in your next show ?" "hat do you do ?" "talk." "es. But what is your act ?" "h, I forgot to tell you. I'm a dog."

MEN... MONEY... AND GUNS

(Continued from preceding page)

Purl, the postmistress. She entered into spirit of the scheme admirably, restricting buyer to two stamps ("Sorry, I can only have two !") but pretending not to when husband wife, and seven children families known to her followed one another buy two each. The short queue became g and permanent one, and from then on introduced all the familiar routine—re savings stamps unless the purchaser also send a telegram, posting up notices Savings Stamps," but supplying them a conspiratorial smirk from under the er to favoured customers, even blandly that she had any while the post office open, but supplying whole sheets to putious callers at the back door after s. Every fresh obstacle placed in their served only to intensify the determination population to buy every savings stamp could obtain. The weekly savings average to £23 14s. 11d. per head of population. I could never understand how the pence comes into it when stamps are nce each. Better still, our methods seem to maintain this demand indefinitely. see no reason why the National Savings mittee, by adopting our system, should not itself able to finance the war and a handsome profit in the bargain. Lady dworth, who was last seen landing on base by parachute in Italy, but has not ned to her base, has not yet heard of our ss. The other three-quarters of the com were so impressed that they recommended for the George Medal and presented me an empty Savings Book as a souvenir. one day I must buy one or two stamps at in it.

"I don't see that it would be possible to live in a more exciting age," said Calamy. "The sense that everything's perfectly provisional and temporary—everything, from social institutions to what we've hitherto regarded as the most sacred scientific truths—the feeling that nothing, from the Treaty of Versailles to the rationally explicable universe, is really safe, the intimate conviction that anything may happen, anything may be discovered—another war, the artificial creation of life, the proof of continued existence after death—why, it's all infinitely exhilarating." "And the possibility that everything may be destroyed?" questioned Mr. Cardan.

"That's exhilarating, too," Calamy answered smiling.

Mr. Cardan shook his head. "It may be rather tame of me," he said, "but I confess, I prefer a more quiet life."

From "Those Barren Leaves," by Aldous Huxley.

AT RANDOM By "Hyperion" Drawings by J. Carver

Black-out Aside

Warden : "I can see a chink through your curtains, madam."

Hostess : "Hush, please, that's a Japanese banker !"

Definition:

Righteous indignation: Your own wrath as opposed to the shocking bad temper of others.

—Elbert Hubbard.



A.A. Gunner : "I have been shooting at nothing all night—and hitting it every time."

At a particularly loud clap of thunder, a lady walking along a London street involuntarily and visibly started. "It's all right, lidy," said a passing urchin. "It ain't 'Itler, it's Gawd."

—Janus in "The Spectator."

Municipal English

A mother whose child was "evacuated" by the county council has received a letter from them, which reads:—

"Considerably more than the time allowed by the Committee has passed since you agreed to take your boy from the care of the County Council, and I have received no reply to my letter asking when you would remove chargeability . . ."

The wretched woman might have got a letter in Greek translated, but has so far found nobody who understands municipal English.

—E. H. Keeling, M.P., in a letter to "The Times."

* * *

Force of Habit

"I do wish you'd forget that you were a shop-walker before you joined the Army, and learn to say 'Quick march,' instead of 'Please step this way !'"

* * *

The Military Touch

Mother : "You are very late for breakfast this morning."

Ten-year-old Son : "I know ; but I have been washing all my strategic points."

Warning to "Rubbernecks."

FAMOUS LAST WORDS : "Let's go and have a look !"

* * *

Hot From the Gun's Mouth

Successive wives of enemy raiders visited London.

(News item.)

They are said to have been fired out of big guns, in the hope that they might join their prisoner husbands. A large net is to be stretched across London to break their fall.

* * *

Epitaph

Here Goebbelz lieth still.

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COVENTRY'S LESSONS Whitehall Delays

MAY I express belated appreciation of your article on the Coventry blitz? My copy was thoughtfully studied by every man in my room.

You state in the February journal that these facts had not been circulated to interested officials by the appropriate authorities. I am not surprised. It is a correct indication of the spirit and attitude of our rulers to those humane services which local government people have rightly tried to advance for so many years.

I hope you will continue this bold and critical policy, as there is too little of it already; the old, diehard "muddle-throughers" are more strongly entrenched than ever—everywhere. LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE can do only good by turning its authoritative spotlight on these dark places.

J. S. COVENTRY.

HEALTH IN THE SHELTERS

Officers' Achievements

I READ with intense interest the article on shelter life in the February journal.

I feel, however, that the impression left with the reader is too one-sided. I do not wish to depreciate what has been done by the Royal College of Nursing or the Joint War Organization of the British Red Cross Society and St. John Ambulance Brigade, but I do feel that credit is due to the local authorities for carrying out the Ministry of Health scheme for providing "Medical Aid Posts" capable of dealing with all illness and emergency.

Medical Aid Posts (not First Aid Posts, the name indicating the wider scope of the work done) are now installed in all large shelters. They are well equipped with dressings, drugs, medicines and utensils, etc. A paid state registered nurse is on duty each night, and at least one auxiliary (either paid or voluntary) supplied through the Red Cross Society or St. John Ambulance Brigade.

Sanitation, too, has been much improved, and thanks for this work are due to the efforts of sanitary inspectors, borough engineers, and others.

You state that the experiment conducted by the Royal College of Nursing was conducted "some weeks ago," but I think that further investigation of present-day conditions in shelters will show that, whilst they are far from ideal, the improvements called for in the article have been dealt with. The article, in fact, is about three months old, and I think that more credit is due to the authorities and all those concerned (including the Joint War Organization) for what has already been accomplished.

It should also be emphasised that the bulk of voluntary, i.e. official "unofficial" work is now being done in smaller shelters by auxiliary nurses and ambulance sisters. Often the local authority is helping with the supply of small quantities of equipment, or the joint organization steps in and supplements.

ROSALIE M. WOODMAN.

Public Health Department,
St. Marylebone.

OFFICERS IN THE BLITZ

A Reply to Miss Betts

YOU invite "constructive comments" on an article: "The Blitz Has Tested Officers, Too," by Barbara Betts, in the February journal.

Would it be an impertinence to ask why valuable space is given to an article in which, frankly, we fail to see any real merit, written by a councillor of the metropolitan borough of St. Pancras?

Throughout the article, Councillor Miss Betts

"damns with faint praise," an attitude which we deplore.

She remarks that officers tend to shirk responsibility; that they fail to take the initiative, always taking a legalistic view, particularly when dealing with government circulars. Are such officers expected to take the responsibility of reading into a document, presumably drawn up by government drafts-

READERS' FORUM

Letters for the May number must reach the Editor, "Local Government Service," 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Middlesex, not later than April 16.

men, some meaning or inference which may or may not be correct? Such a course might result in an expenditure of public money which a district auditor would surcharge on the members of a council. Would Miss Betts support such action by an officer? Is it really lack of initiative, or endeavour to safeguard a council's interests?

Miss Betts appears to throw upon chief officers the responsibility of acting strictly upon the written word, contained in government communications when it is fairly obvious that it is, or should be, the duty of the councillors to determine policy.

With regard to the speedy repairs carried out at a town hall mentioned by Miss Betts, surely this work and its cost was the responsibility of the appropriate committee.

Miss Betts also condemns the efficient but unsympathetic manner of dealing with inquiries. We suggest that, in these days of difficult and novel inquiries, she might be more thankful for the efficiency and be a little less exacting as to the need for sympathy. Possibly she does not appreciate that some members of the public seek to bring into the discussion all sorts of irrelevant details, and that to listen to a lengthy harangue would lessen efficiency.

Miss Betts suggests that a council staff should be run on the lines of a big newspaper office, and the town clerk given a status similar to that of an editor. If one of the results of such an arrangement were that the council and its committees ceased to interest themselves in purely technical matters and gave more support and less hindrance to their officers, it would be most acceptable, especially if salaries were made commensurate with the responsibilities, work, and qualifications of the officers. But it is a "safe bet" that a committee would still debate for hours upon such "weighty" matters as whether or not an individual officer should have his salary increased by, say, £10.

Miss Betts says she believes that the piling of A.R.P. work on executive officers has gone too far, and that it is impossible to get the best work out of chief officers who are spending half their nights in control rooms. Does she appreciate how much more important it is to give a good night's rest to those officers who have to do the more intricate and detailed work, explain it to their chiefs, attend in control rooms, and still watch the clock to avoid being one minute late?

We do not agree with much that Miss Betts has written and, for the future, would prefer to see in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE articles written by officers actually doing the work, rather than by councillors, whose attitude must, of necessity, be that of employer to employee.

TWO HARASSED OFFICERS.

AFFILIATION TO THE T.U.C.

Blow to NALGO Principles

HAVE our fervent advocates of affiliation with the T.U.C. given all the thought to the subject that they might have done? It has not been sufficiently realised, I think, that this far-reaching and revolutionary proposal strikes a shattering blow at the basic principles of what is a thoroughly democratic institution.

NALGO has been built slowly and painstakingly on the freedom-of-choice principle.

When faced with deadlock on questions of salary, or service conditions, if it has threatened or coerced, much less has it instructed its members to lay down their pens and vacate their desks. On the contrary, the association has followed the reasonable and eminently practical course of persistent negotiation. And who but the most carping critics will aver that a fair measure of success has not followed these efforts?

Are we, then, to be led into a system that is excellent enough in its own sphere, may be in spite of pitfalls when applied to local government administration? There is, of course, a class mind that rejoices in the anticipation of coercion and strikes. But is such a mental calculation to further the causes that lie nearest our hearts—the preservation of democratic institutions, and the perfecting of local government administration?

Liverpool.

H. RICHARDS.

The Political Aspect

ADVOCATES of affiliation would do well to remember that, as the T.U.C. is affiliated to the Labour Party, there are many like myself who would decline to support that party and, in consequence, resign membership of NALGO.

I suggest that it is highly improbable that even a majority of NALGO members are supporters of the Labour Party; probably there is a considerable anti-Socialist majority.

HARROGATE MEMBER.

OVERTIME PROBLEM

An "Outsider's" View

MAY I offer the views of an "outsider" who has just had a short experience of local government work and its officials?

A few months ago, after a lifetime in another profession, I went to assist in a local government office, where the staff had been depleted by the national call. My remuneration was pittance—office boy's wages—but that was secondary consideration. I gave what help I could and I have reason to think I was of some value. But, although I enjoyed the work, soon got the impression that I was working with serfs. Office hours were nominally 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., but I found that I was the only person to leave at 5 p.m. Puzzled, I mentioned the matter only to be told: "Oh, no one ever thinks of leaving till 5.15 or 5.20, and most of us come back after tea to work on till 7.30 or 8 p.m."

To which I replied: "You must be doing well with overtime money." Then I received a shock when told: "We get no overtime money—we have to do it!" I asked: "Would the authority dare ask its artisinal workers or any others to work overtime without pay? What would their union say?" The reply was: "We have a union, but unfortunately it is not strong enough to do anything!"

I can partly understand why NALGO is so ineffective. Fancy a union with each branch working independently on its own—that is not "union." Hitler got Balkan States one by one. It was easy for him. Had they united, the story might have been different.

Again, local government servants apparently do not respect themselves, and if this is so they cannot expect their "bosses" or anyone else to respect them. It seems they value the "union" at less than £1 per day. If that is their own valuation, they cannot expect others to value them in a higher degree.

Many of the staff still appear to hold the idea that it is hardly respectable to belong to a trade union. I belonged to a profession which, forty years ago, many members had the same snobbish idea. Fortunately for myself and thousands of others, the snobs were overcome, and my advice to local government officials is: "Go and do likewise" and make NALGO a union. At present, it is not Tintern, Mon.

ADSUM.

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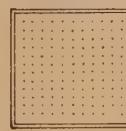
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92 NALGO DEFENDS THE OFFICER

Town Clerk Libelled

A MEMBER of a town council, who runs a book-lending library in the town, issued with each book a bookmark containing his version of local affairs. Some of the bookmarks suggested that the town clerk should be dismissed; that he had secretly and improperly obtained a salary increase; that he had stampeded his council into submitting to NALGO's terms; that he had squandered public money; and that there had been some underhand work which had



Chief Clerk: "Been to get your hair cut! What do you think would happen if I kept going out to get my hair cut?"

Temporary: "The barber wouldn't half laugh!"

led to his being rejected for the Navy on medical grounds when there were no real medical grounds on which he could properly be rejected.

The town clerk, being a member of the association, applied for legal assistance, and Counsel's Opinion was obtained. Counsel advised that an action for libel would succeed, and proceedings for damages were begun.

The action was heard before Mr. Justice Atkinson on February 12, Mr. H. J. Brown appearing for the town clerk and the defendant conducting his own case. Judgment was given in favour of the town clerk for £100 damages with costs, and an injunction was granted restraining the defendant from any further writing or publishing of the statements complained of or any statement defamatory of the town clerk and substantially to the like effect. In giving judgment, Mr. Justice Atkinson said:

"The town clerk emerges from this trial in a very strong position, because witness after witness, including the defendant himself, admit that he is an admirable town clerk who has done his work extremely well. Some witnesses have said, or at least one, that his work has been done very often when he was obviously suffering from ill-health and when men less determined to do their duty might very well have stopped at home. That is the type of man who has been attacked."

"Why has he been attacked? The defendant does not suggest that a single one of these statements was true or that he thought they were. He said: 'I deliberately made these statements about the town clerk because I hoped they would lead to an inquiry, not into his conduct, but to an inquiry in which I might be able to attack the council as a whole and their treatment of me.' That is his own case. I have heard some discreditable motives in my time, but it is difficult to think of a course of conduct less honourable and more contemptible than that adopted by the defendant in this case."

"Many libel actions are brought with which a judge has not much sympathy, and which might have been avoided; sometimes they are only brought for the purpose of getting money. But I think a man in the position of a town clerk, dealing with a man who had been a town councillor for so many years, and seeing that these things were repeated again and again, was bound to come here."

"I think a jury would very likely have given the plaintiff very substantial damages; but I have expressed the view before that it does not follow that a judge ought to give the damages which he thinks a jury would give. It is the only opportunity a jury has; it is the only way in which a jury can express its views of a defendant's conduct. But a judge can express his view, as I have expressed my view in my judgment; and therefore it is not necessary that the sum awarded would be such as a jury would have awarded."

Dismissal of a Sanitary Inspector

AN urban district council applied to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Transport for sanction to terminate the appointment of their sanitary inspector and surveyor, and the Ministries decided jointly to hold a local inquiry. The decision of the council was obtained by a small majority and two of the members who voted for the officer's dismissal were defendants in a recent successful action for libel which he brought against them with the support of the association.

A local solicitor was instructed to appear at the inquiry on behalf of the members.

The Ministries, after considering the inspectors' reports, decided that they would not be justified in consenting to the officer's dismissal. Further, in pursuance of his powers under section 290 (5) of the Local Government Act, 1933, the Minister of Health ordered the council to pay 20 guineas towards the costs incurred by the sanitary inspector and surveyor.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Income Tax Honoria

Referring to the answer under the above heading on page 64 of the March journal, is a gratuity under section 11 (1) of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, taxable if paid by instalments or by a lump sum? If so, would earned income relief be allowable in computing the liability to tax?

A gratuity given under section 11 (1) of the Act of 1937 is a voluntary payment which accrues to the employee in virtue of his office or employment and, therefore, income tax is payable on it whether it is paid by instalments or in a lump sum. It will, of course, be assessed as part of the income for the year, and as such will attract earned income relief.

Fire Watchers

Will compensation be payable under the Personal Injuries (Civilians) Scheme, 1940, to persons who are required to discharge fire prevention duties at business premises situated in an area prescribed under the Fire Prevention (Business Premises) Order, 1941, and to persons who volunteer for such duties at premises not yet prescribed under the Order?

All persons properly enrolled or registered as fire watchers, whether compulsorily or voluntarily, are to be covered as civil defence volunteers under an amended Personal Injuries (Civilians) Scheme. Where necessary, this cover will be made retrospective to Dec. 24, 1940.

Cost of Living Bonus

On page 274 of the December, 1940, journal there was an answer, under the above heading, to the effect that a local authority cannot stipulate that a cost of living bonus shall not rank for superannuation purposes because of the decision in *Dewhurst v. Salford Guardians* (1926). My council has granted a cost-of-living bonus, but I am told that it will not rank for superannuation purposes because of the definition of "salary" in our local act superannuation scheme which is "the salary actually payable by the Corporation to any officer, but does not include any bonus or like payment granted to meet abnormal conditions." Does the decision in *Dewhurst v. Salford Guardians* override this provision?

No. The scheme expressly provides that any bonus granted to meet abnormal conditions shall not be included as salary for superannuation purposes. The answer given in December was, of course, intended to apply only to cases where the superannuation scheme provides (without excluding bonus) that all remuneration received by an officer as such shall be taken into account for superannuation purposes.

Fire Prevention (Business Premises) Order

Who is the occupier of premises owned by a local authority, for the purposes of Article 2 (2) of the above Order?

Presumably the local authority. Article 7 (4) (c) of the Order provides that the expression "local government premises" means for the purposes of that article, premises occupied by a local authority for the purpose of discharging its functions. Local authorities will, however, probably rely on their officers ensuring that the provisions of the order are carried out.

Sickness Benefit

If I am ill and wish to claim sickness benefit, shall I be penalised if I do not give notice of my illness immediately?

Yes; notice of illness must be given either to your local correspondent or to Headquarters within the first three days, in accordance with the National Health Insurance Act, otherwise loss of benefit will result.

If I am ill, must I submit a certificate within the first three days in order to give notice of incapacity?

No; it is sufficient if you write or telephone your local correspondent stating that medical evidence will be forwarded as soon as possible.



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SALARIES AND SERVICE CONDITIONS

RECENT progress in NALGO's campaign for higher standards of salary and service conditions for its members is recorded in the following reports:

NORTH WESTERN AND NORTH WALES.

Ashton-under-Lyne.—The appeals sub-committee of the Lancashire and Cheshire Whitley council has recommended the re-grading of an accounts clerk in the waterworks department from general division to clerical section A of the Whitley scales.

Stalybridge.—An application in respect of a member of the town clerk's staff to be placed on the appropriate Whitley council grading, i.e. general division, maximum £190 p.a. has been successful.

The appeals sub-committee of the Lancashire and Cheshire Whitley council has recommended the re-grading of the second male clerk in the borough engineer and surveyor's department from general division to clerical section A of the Whitley scales.

Wigan.—An application for increased meals allowance (in lieu of overtime payments) has been successful.

A sub-branch of the Merioneth county branch has been formed at Blaenau-Ffestiniog. The acting secretary is Mr. D. O. Jones, chief financial officer, Ffestiniog U.D.C.

SOUTHERN REGION

Bath city council has adopted revised scales of salaries and a grading scheme from December 1, 1940. The new scales are based upon Scale II of the Association's minimum recommendations:

GRADE A.

Men: £45 (at 15) + £10 (3) + £15 (11) — £240 (at 29). (Appropriate intermediate examination required after £180.)

Women: £55 (at 16) + £10 (8) + £5 (11) — £140 (at 25).

GRADE B.

Males: £225 + £15 — £300
£225 + £15 — £300

Females: £140 + £15 — £200 (Senior shorthand typists, senior machine operators and supervisors).

GRADE C.

£285 + £15 — £360

(Increments in Grade A, on birthdays, in grades B and C, on April 1 each year.)

A joint committee consisting of four members of the salaries committee and four members of NALGO, under the chairmanship of the ex-mayor for the time being, is set up to discuss and report upon all matters affecting the staff which may arise in the future.

Bridgwater B.C. has revised its junior grade. The new grade for males and females is £40 (at age 15) + £10 (2) + £15 (3) + £10 (5) (at age 20).

Hitchin U.D.C. has amended its existing scale of salaries for general clerical staff (males) and adopted NALGO Scale I, Grade A, which provides for a salary of £55 at age 16 years, rising to £225 at age 28. Female staff will be placed on the following scale:

£45 (at 16) + £10 (4) + £15 (5) — £160 (at 25).

Officers of the Truro city and rural district councils have decided to form a branch of NALGO. After an inaugural meeting addressed by Mr. N. M. Woodcock, the divisional officer, the following officers were elected: chairman, Mr. E. J. Pepper (clerk to the rating committee of the Truro R.D.C.); hon. secretary, Mr. F. R. Balme, (chief financial officer, Truro City council); and hon. treasurer, Mr. R. N. Witter (chief financial officer, Truro R.D.C.).

NORTH-EASTERN AND YORKSHIRE

Darlington C. B. has improved the scales of salaries applicable to juniors (females).

The North-Eastern Joint Council which last year adopted a sliding scale cost-of-living bonus at variance with the recommendations of the National Whitley Council, the following recommendation was approved:

(a) That for the duration of the war, the recommendations as to cost-of-living bonus made from time to time by the National Joint Council be adopted, and all resolutions to the contrary altered, varied, or rescinded accordingly.

(b) That the cost-of-living bonus adopted by the North-Eastern Joint Council be stabilised at the figures operative from January 1, 1941, and that in the case of those authorities who are applying the bonus, that rate of bonus continues in operation until the bonus award of the National Joint Council in relation to each officer reaches the figure at which the bonus is stabilised as above.

(c) That local authorities other than those covered by (b) above be strongly recommended to operate the National Joint Council award as from January 1, 1941.

(d) That no officer be prejudicially affected by the operation of these recommendations.

It will be noted that the position of officers receiving bonus in accordance with the original recommendation of the Joint Council is safeguarded. The general acceptance of the principle of adopting the national recommendations is most commendable and should strengthen the Whitley Council movement in the service.

Scarborough corporation has agreed in principle to the establishment of a local joint committee.

MIDLANDS AND S. WALES REGION

Dudley C.B. has adopted the following revised scales for juniors from January 1, 1941:

Men: £60 (at 16) + £10 (3) + £20 (1) + £10 (1) — £120 (at 21).

Women: £50 (at 16) + £10 (5) — £100 (at 21).

Worcester city council has introduced the following scale for women juniors:

£45 (at 16) + £10 (1) + £15 (4) — £115 (at 21).

Darlaston U.D.C. has decided to join the West Midlands provincial council.

EASTERN DISTRICT COMMITTEE

A FURTHER attempt to secure more general adoption of the Whitley council cost-of-living bonus award was reported to the Eastern District committee when it met at Cambridge on March 8. The divisional officer said that, in the light of a conversation he had had with the chief conciliation officer of the Ministry of Labour, it was proposed to bring constituent authorities of the provincial council, which had not adopted the award, before the provincial council, in an endeavour to effect a favourable settlement without recourse to arbitration.

NALGO ADDRESSES

To avoid delay, members are asked to address correspondence as follows:

On all subjects except ancillaries, in the first place to the appropriate district office:

SOUTHERN REGION

Regional Officer (and Metropolitan district): T. M. Kershaw, 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex (EDGWARE 2025).

Divisional Officer (Easterland South-Eastern districts): J. Melvin, 54, New Street, Chelmsford (Chelmsford 4347).

Divisional Officer (Southern and South Western districts): N. M. Woodcock, 10, Hutcombe Bay, Stonegallows Hill, Taunton (Taunton 2779).

E. and W. MIDLANDS AND S. WALES REGION

Regional Officer (and E. and W. Midland districts): J. E. N. Davis, 14, Earlsbury Gardens, Birchfields, Birmingham 20 (Birchfields 5123).

Divisional Officer (S. Wales and Monmouthshire districts): A. H. Geary, 11, Park Place, Cardiff.

NORTH-WESTERN DISTRICT

Divisional Secretary: Haden Corser, 2, Mount Street, Manchester 2 (Blackfriars 7668).

NORTH-EASTERN AND YORKSHIRE DISTRICTS

Divisional Secretary: W. Cecil Wood, 12, East Parade, Leeds (Leeds 24861).

SCOTTISH DISTRICT

Divisional Secretary: J. M. Mortimer, 67, West Nile Street, Glasgow, C.1 (Douglas 0404).

Relating to NALGO ancillaries and the supply and delivery of "Local Government Service," to

The General Secretary, NALGO, Croyde, Braunton, North Devon (Croyde 212).

Relating to Public Relations and "Local Government Service" (editorial), to

The Public Relations Officer, 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex (EDGWARE 2025).

Relating to "Local Government Service" advertisements to

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LONDON OFFICE

The General Secretary, 27, Abingdon Street, Westminster, S.W.1, Telephone and Telegrams WHitehall 9351.

It was reported that all county branches save Hertfordshire had notified their willingness to accept the normal subscriptions rebate of 35 per cent for the year 1940/41. Hertfordshire branch pointed out that, owing to difficulties of branch administration, the retention of the 40 per cent was essential if the work of branch was to be carried out satisfactorily, and the district committee unanimously decided to support the application.

A full meeting of the provincial council is to be held shortly to consider proposals from the staff side regarding salaries and classification of staff.

Mr. A. Denton Odgen, N.E.C., on behalf of the committee, presented a travelling trunk and two Dunhill pipes to Mr. C. F. Lolley who, on becoming chairman of the district committee, had resigned from the secretarial work of the benevolent and orphan fund sub-committee.

NALGO HOUSE

Owing to the increased cost of running NALGO House, the convalescent home at Matlock, it has been found necessary to increase the charges. These are now £2 7s. 6d. a week to members of the Benevolent and Orphan Fund and Provident Society and their wives, and £2 17s. 6d. per week to members of the association who are not also members of the Provident Society or B. and O. Fund. Residence is still free to members of the Approved Society who have qualified for additional benefits.

OBITUARY

We regret to record the deaths of the following NALGO members:

Miss R. Vineall, county health visitor, Worcester, and a member of the executive of the Worcestershire county officers' association.

Mr. F. W. Cuthbertson, town clerk of Eastleigh, Hants.

Mr. Arthur Purkis, town clerk of Deptford from 1913 to 1935, and former president of Deptford branch.

SCOTTISH NOTES

A NUMBER of important questions were discussed at a meeting of the executive of the Scottish Whitley council on February 14. They included:

Curtailment of Holidays.—It was agreed to recommend the council to adopt the following resolution:

"The joint industrial council has had under consideration the question of holidays to clerical, technical and administrative staffs in the current year. Amongst other matters, the council had under review the general holiday arrangements for manual workers in the present emergency and the additional duties which the administrative, etc., staffs are undertaking at the present time without extra remuneration and, while it is recognised that conditions may be difficult owing to the calling-up of additional classes, and the consequent depletion of staffs, the industrial council hopes that, by spreading holidays, the local authorities may be able to avoid any unnecessary curtailment of annual leave in the case of the administrative, etc., staffs."

Scales for Registrars.—Salary scales for registrars of births, deaths, and marriages were submitted, and it was agreed, at Mr. Mortimer's suggestion, to invite the Registrar-General for Scotland to attend a future meeting and submit his views.

Service Conditions.—The staff side submitted draft regulations to govern conditions of service of the administrative, etc., staffs, and it was agreed to remit this to a special committee for consideration and report.

Cost-of-Living Bonus.—The staff side has applied for revision of the existing award.

Fife Annual Meeting

Members from all over the county attended the annual meeting of the Fife branch at Kirkcaldy on February 15, with Mr. Alex. Baxter, the president, in the chair. The annual report, submitted by Mr. W. J. Curran, showed that the membership was much the same as last year and that many questions affecting the interests of the members had been dealt with. The divisional secretary addressed the meeting and answered questions on the working of the joint industrial council and cost-of-living increases.

Port Glasgow Dispute

On February 26, the divisional secretary had a long interview with a committee of Port Glasgow town council regarding salary scales and war bonus, with a view to arriving at a settlement of the dispute reported to the Ministry of Labour, under the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Order. When he left the meeting, he was under the impression that a basis of settlement had been reached, but a subsequent letter from the town clerk put a different complexion on the nature of the proposals, and the position at the moment of writing is that the Ministry has been informed that negotiations have broken down.

North of Scotland Branch

The executive of the North of Scotland branch met on March 7. The divisional secretary spoke of negotiations at the joint industrial council.

Cost of Living 27.1 p.c. Up

The Ministry of Labour cost of living index figures for each of the past six months, showing the increase in cost of living of a "typical working-class family," since July 1914 (taken as 100) are:

October	189	January	196
November	192	February	197
December	195	March	197

The actual percentage increases in the cost of living since September 1, 1939 (when the index figure was 155) are, therefore:

October	21.9	January	26.4
November	23.9	February	27.1
December	25.8	March	27.1

HELP FOR THE B. AND O. FUND

Despite present-day difficulties, many branches are doing magnificent work for the Benevolent and Orphan Fund.

Outstanding recent achievements include the following:

Bridlington—donation of £20 from branch funds.

Durham Rural—£15 raised by whist drive and dance.

East Riding, C.C.—£12 7s. raised by means of two draws for savings certificates, bought out of branch funds.

Grimsby—donation of £55 5s.—part of a total of £148 16s. 10d. raised in the past twelve months; the remainder was given to local funds.

Normanton—donation of £5; 16 members have doubled their subscriptions and four new members have been enrolled.

North Herts—£10 18s. 10d., raised by two dances.

St. Helens—donation of £50.

Sheffield—donation of £75, raised by voluntary contributions during November, December and January.

Southport—£2 4s., raised mainly by a dance.

Wortley—Donation of £2 2s. from branch funds.

In addition, many branches have induced their members to subscribe £6 a month to the fund.

The secretary of the East Riding branch stresses the value of utilising branch funds in the way they were used, rather than giving them direct. The branch gave £4 10s. for the purchase of six savings certificates. Two draws were held for these, raising a total of £12 7s. for the fund and encouraging the savings movement at the same time.

RETIREMENTS

Dr. G. Clark Trotter, medical officer of health, at Islington for the past 20 years, and one-time vice-president of the Scottish branch of NALGO.

Mr. David Edwards, M.I.C.E., F.S.I., borough engineer and surveyor at Brighton since 1924, and president of the Brighton branch in 1931-2.

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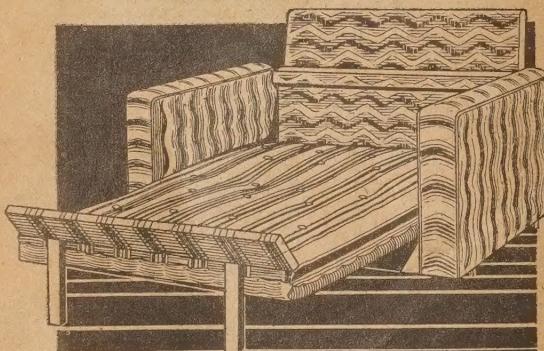
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